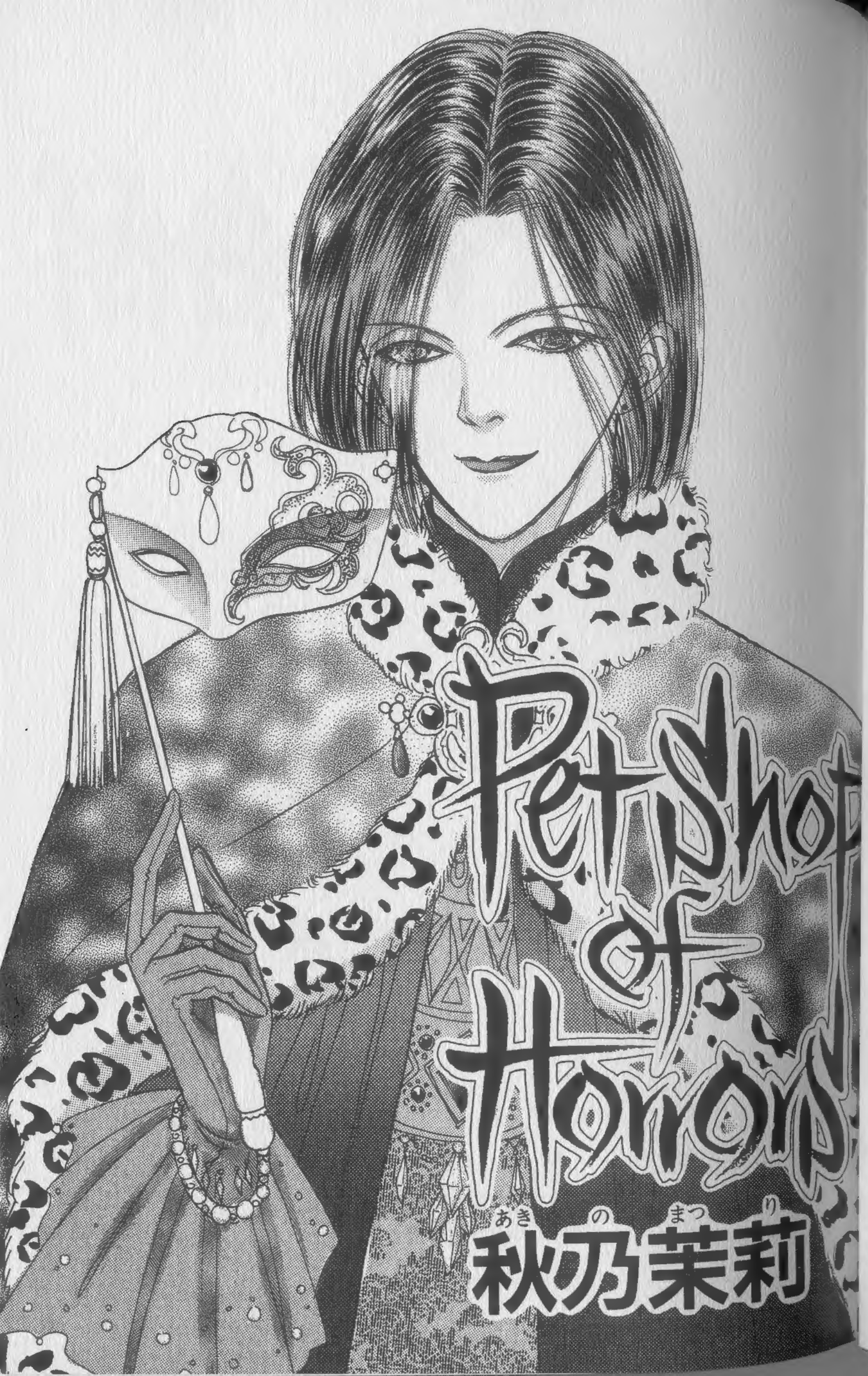
Pet Shop of Horrors
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秋乃茉莉

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Pet Shop of Horrors

Volume 9

by Matsuri Akino

TOKYOPOP®

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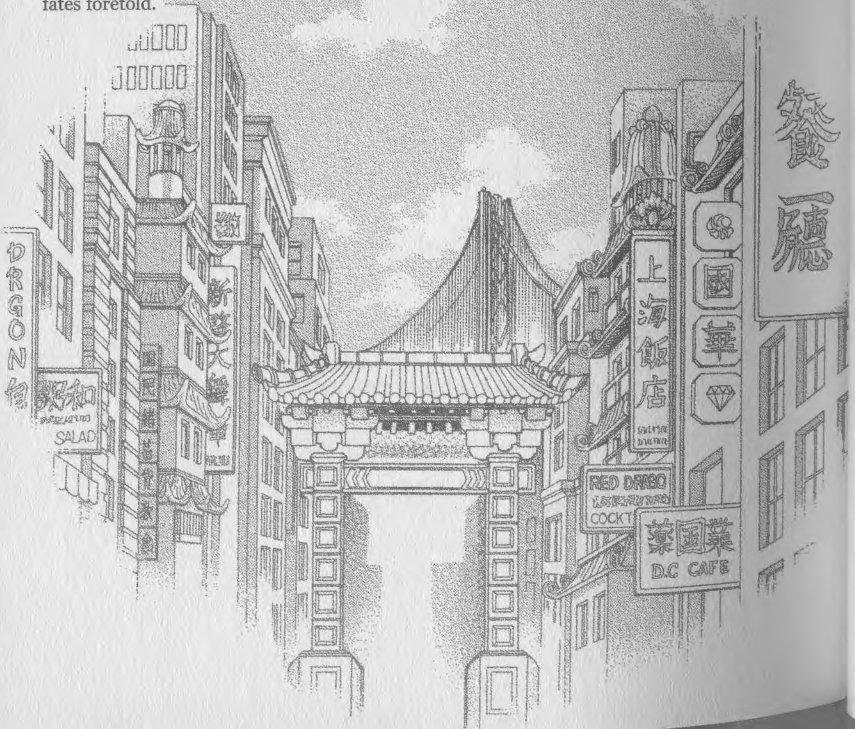
The Story so far

Plumes of mist billow up from the back alleys of Chinatown, home to a variety of merchants of the occult and mystical. And in the crevices of this urban barrio sits a solitary pet shop. Its proprietor, an enigmatic figure known as Count D, beckons through his doors the injured and the scarred, introducing them to creatures wondrous and bizarre.

Our guide through this mysterious landscape is one Detective Leon Orcot, who has traced a series of seemingly unrelated crimes to Count D and his Pet Shop of Horrors. A steadfast skeptic, Leon dismisses as trickery the inexplicable events he witnesses. But in his continual attempts to prove D's guilt, this hard-boiled dick inevitably finds himself enraptured by the illusions around him.

The detective, therefore, has formed a strange friendship with his suspect. And as the bond between the two thickens, one must question who has the upper hand. Is the Count playing into the detective's hands, or is it the other way around? Now the veils of secrecy are slowly being withdrawn...the hidden truths of the detective and the dark secrets of the Count are soon to be revealed.

Prepare yourselves now for four tales of wonder and woe in which lessons are learned and fates foretold.



Pet Shop of Horrors Vol. 9
created by Matsuri Akino

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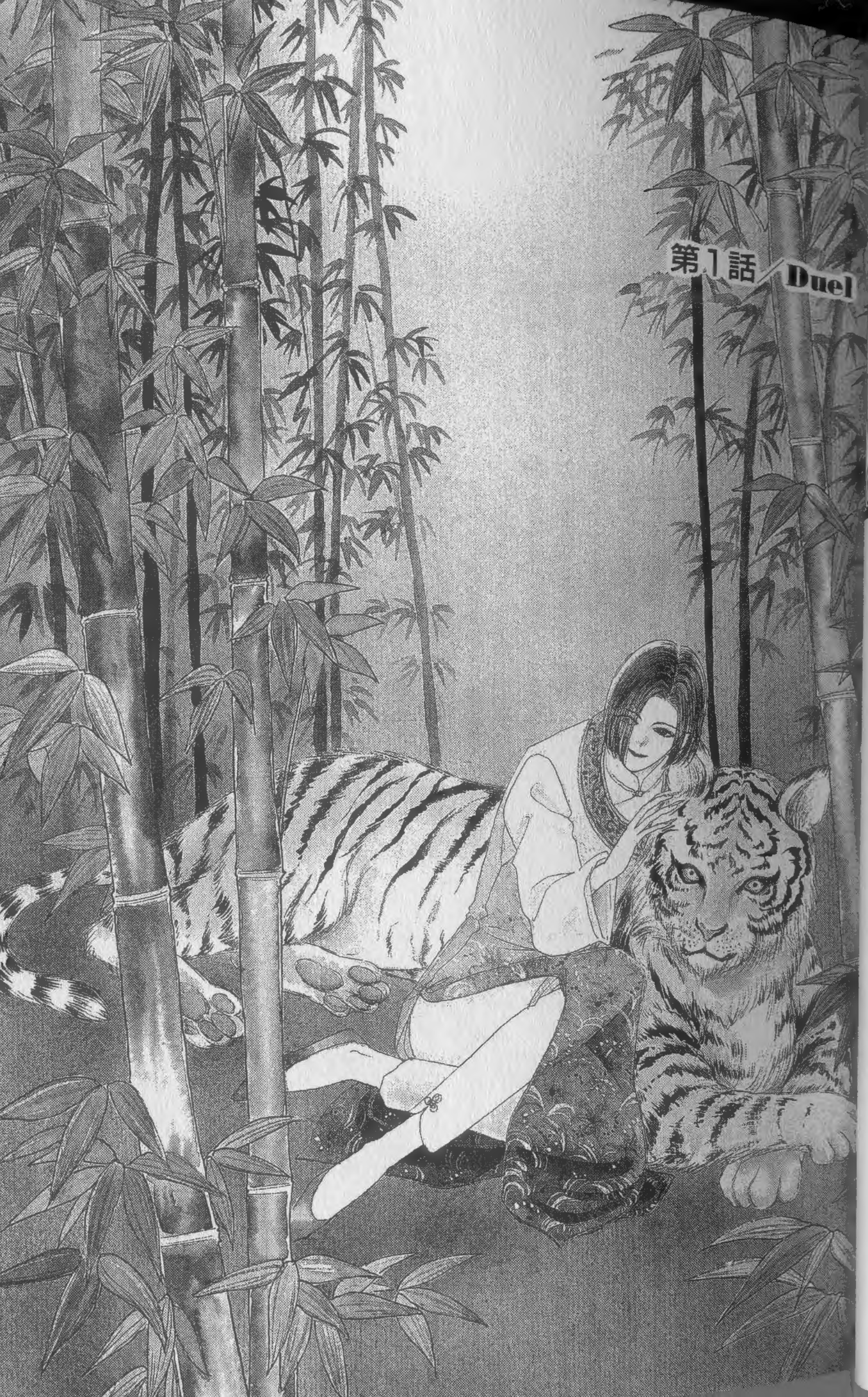


CONTENTS

1 Duel.........................7

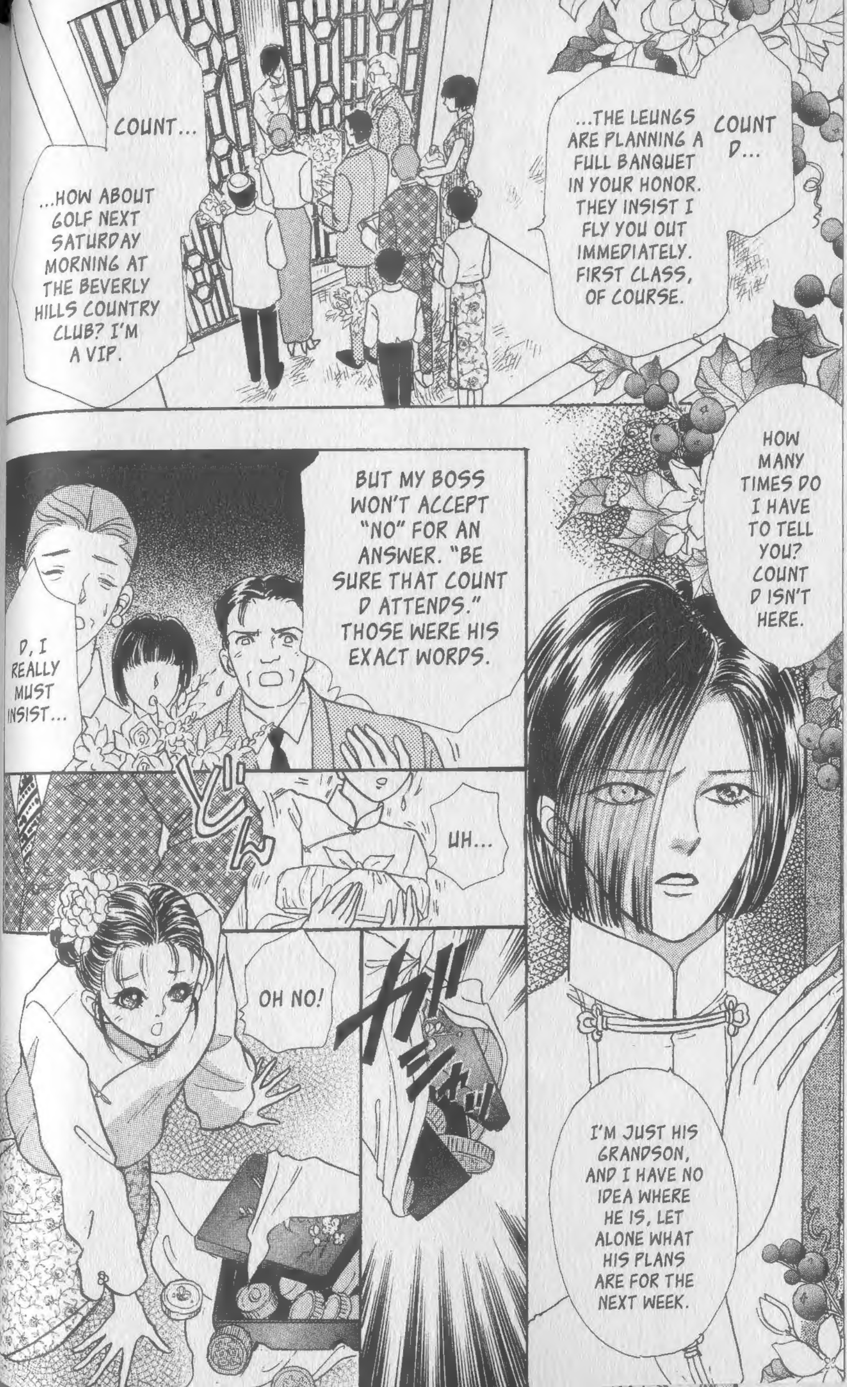
2 Durableness................53

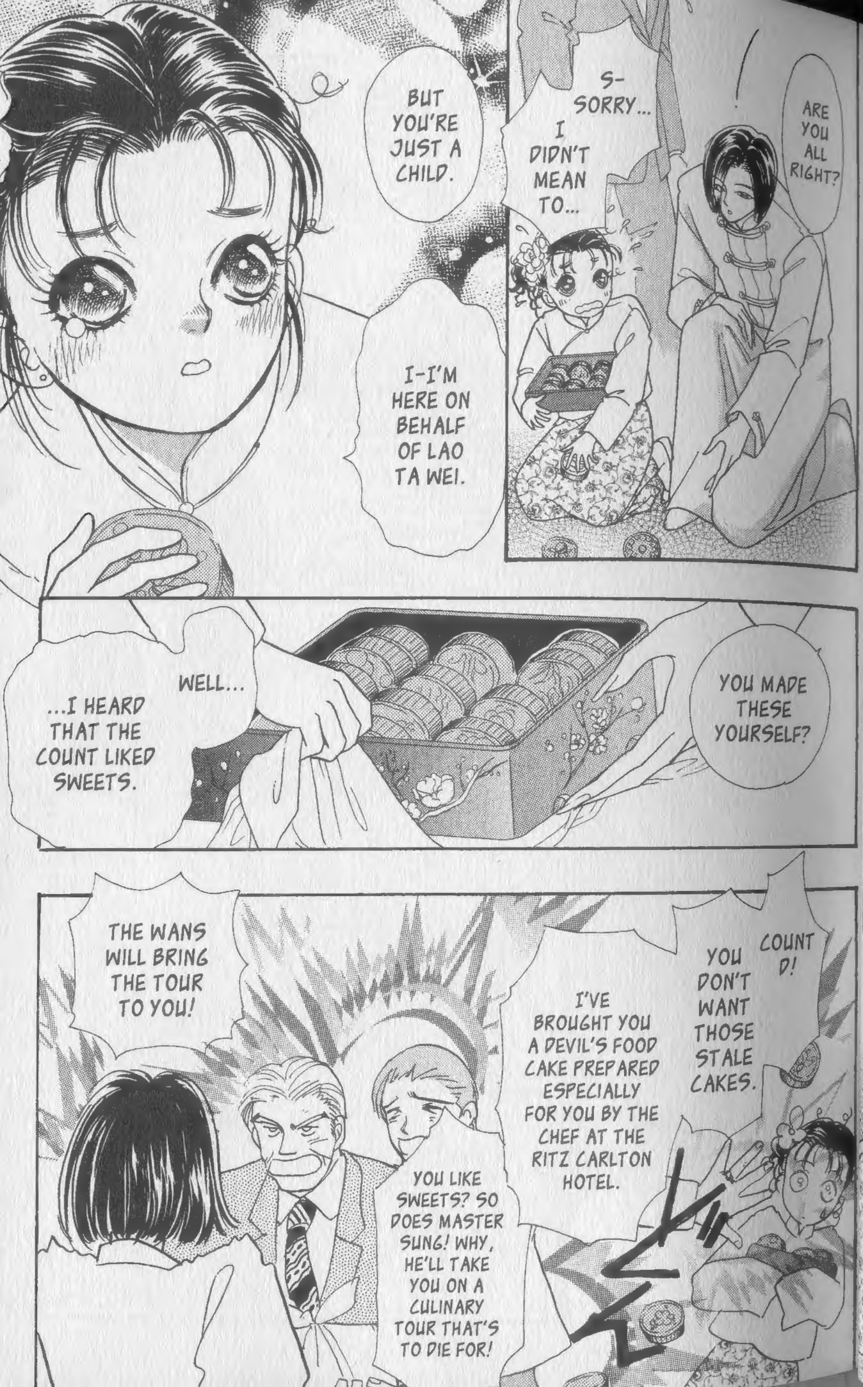
3 Desperation...............103

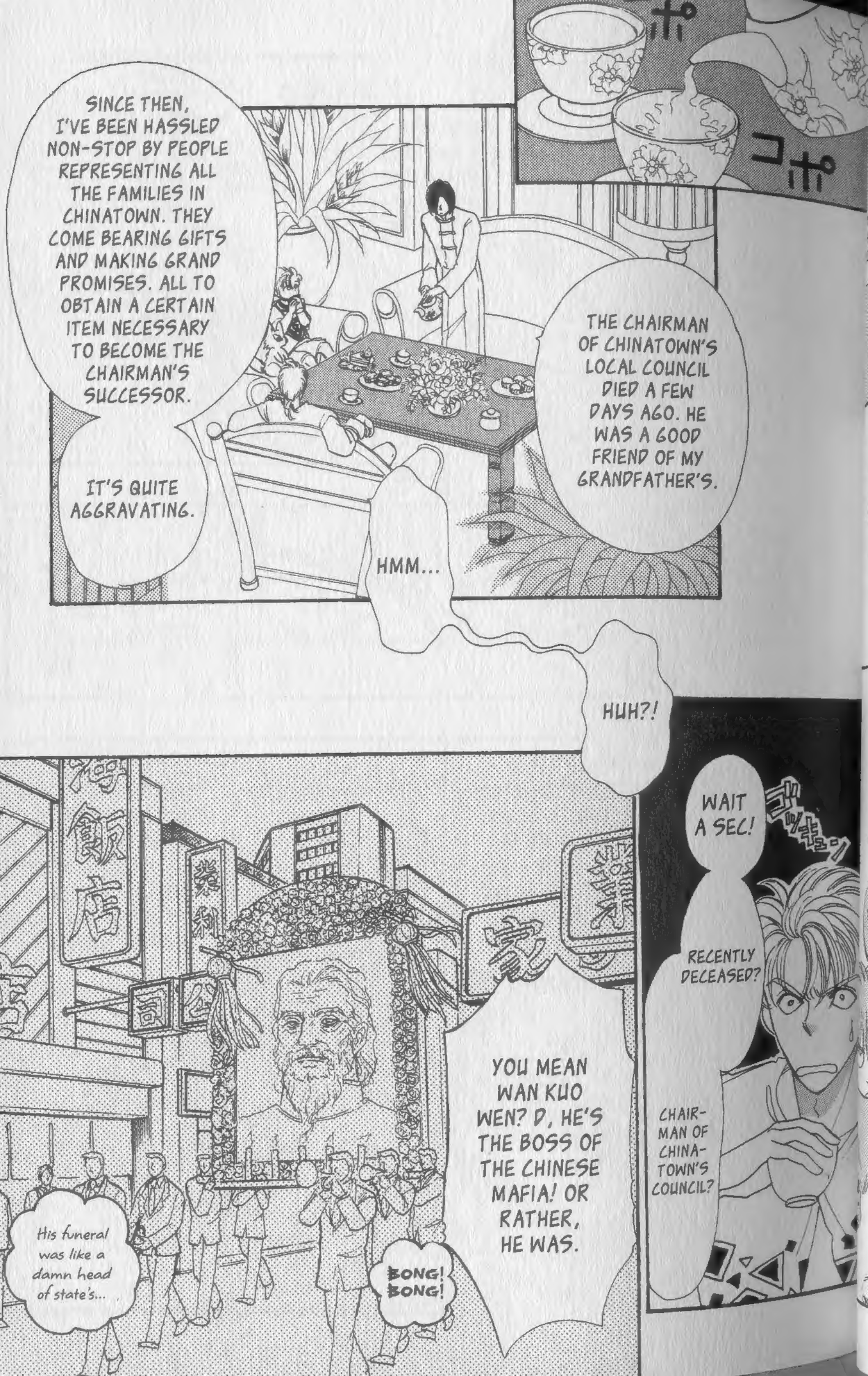
4 Dynasty....................165

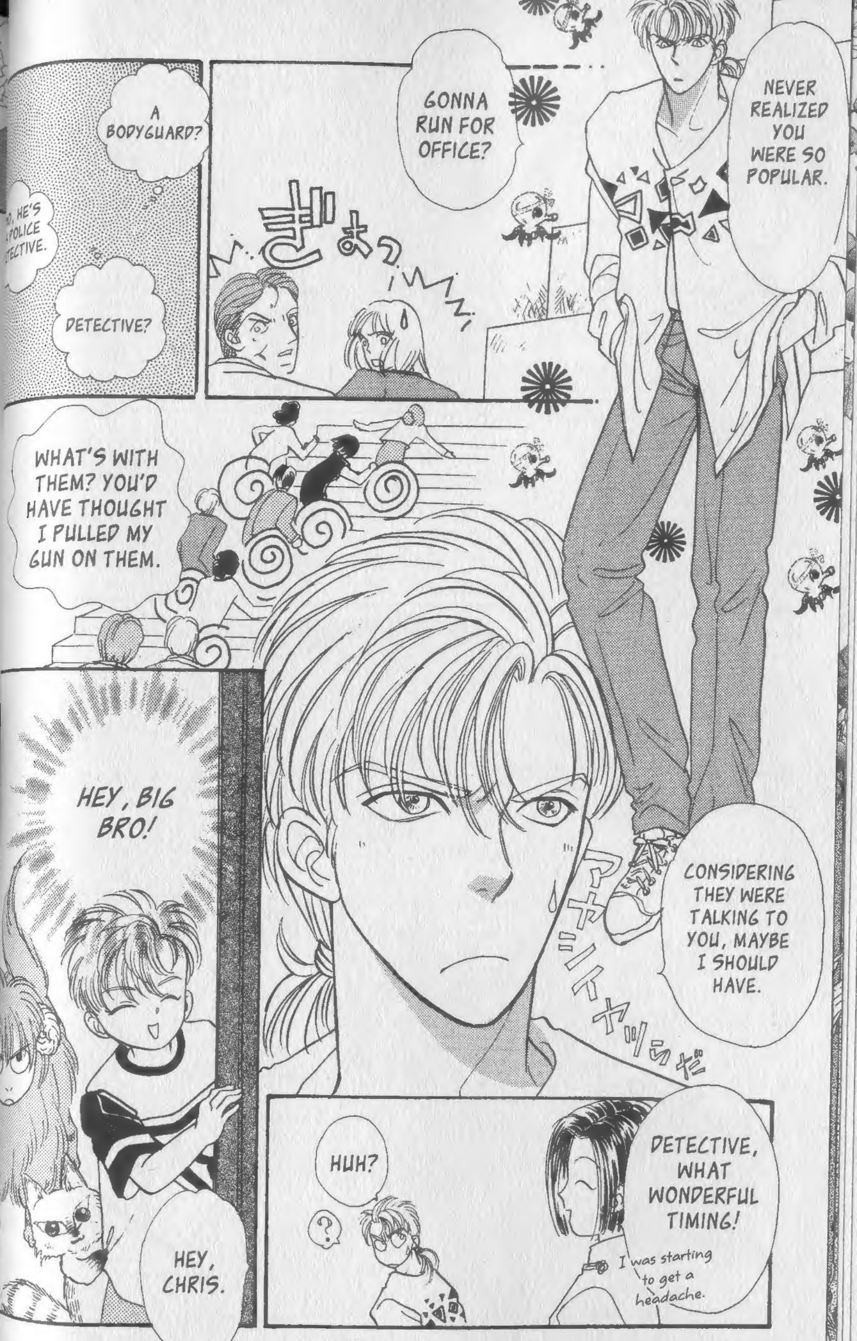
Pet Catalog...............215

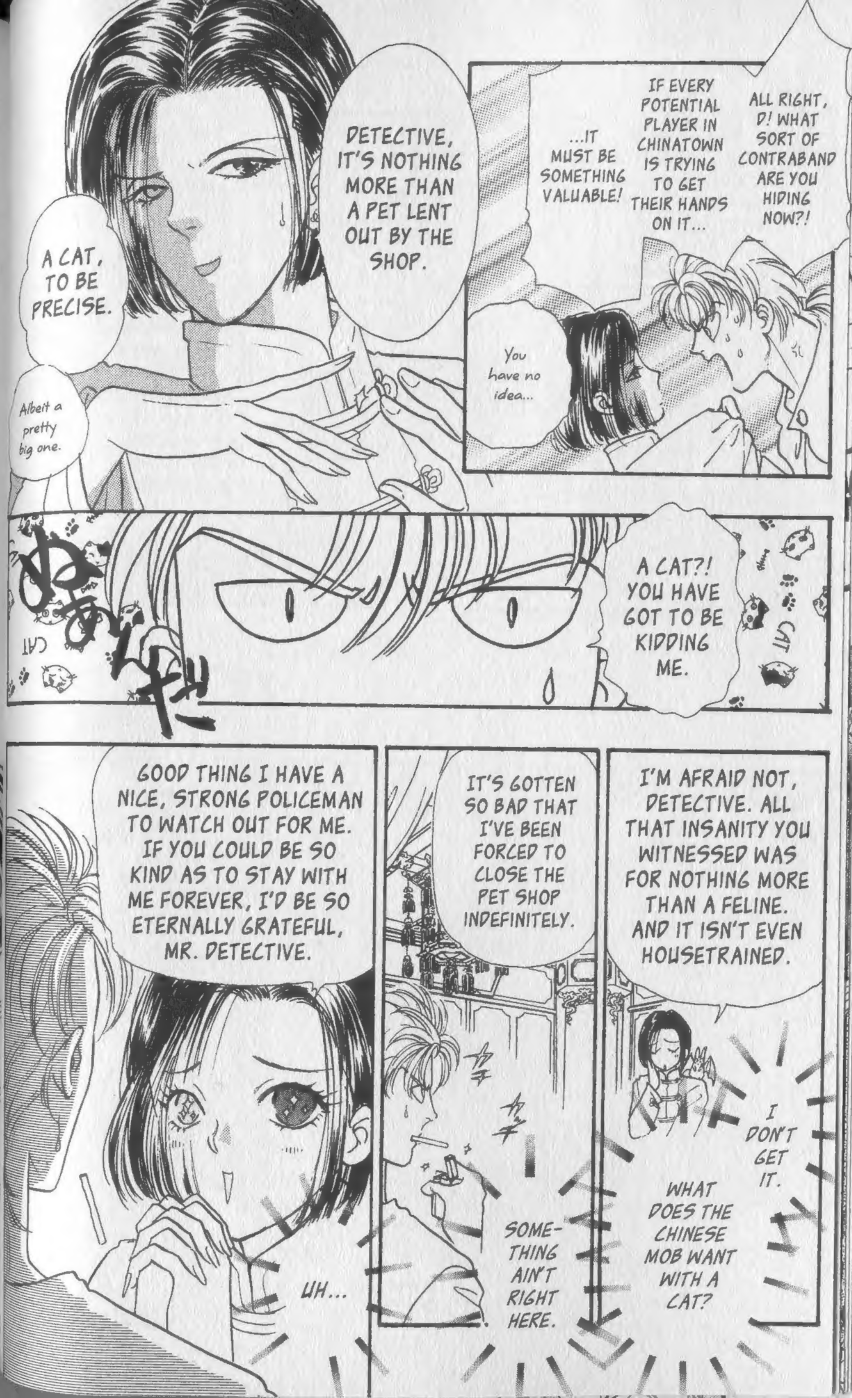
A Lesson in Sexual Education.................217

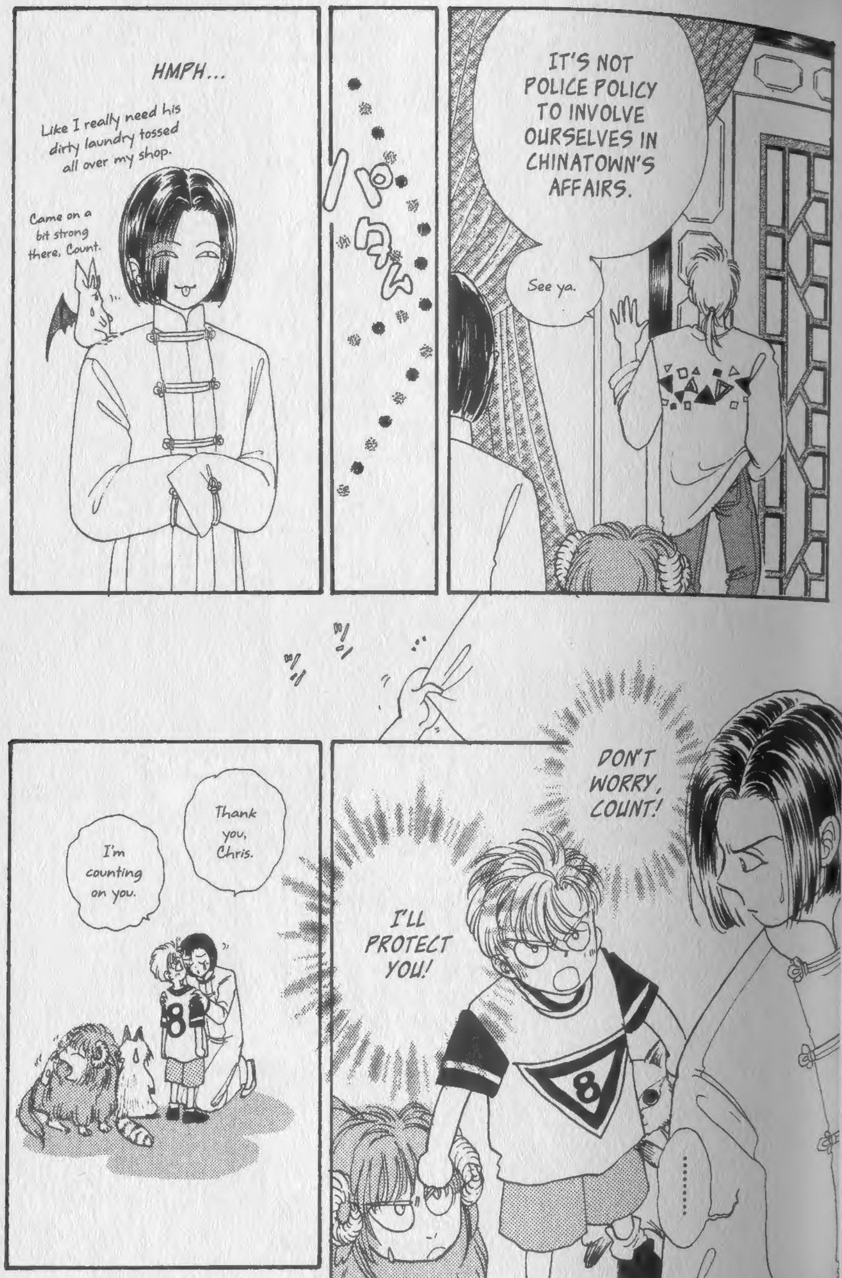

COUNT D...
...THE LEUNGS ARE PLANNING A FULL BANQUET IN YOUR HONOR. THEY INSIST I FLY YOU OUT IMMEDIATELY. FIRST CLASS, OF COURSE.
COUNT...
...HOW ABOUT GOLF NEXT SATURDAY MORNING AT THE BEVERLY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB? I'M A VIP.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU? COUNT D ISN'T HERE.
BUT MY BOSS WON'T ACCEPT "NO" FOR AN ANSWER. "BE SURE THAT COUNT D ATTENDS." THOSE WERE HIS EXACT WORDS.
D, I REALLY MUST INSIST...
どん
UH...
ガシャッ
OH NO!
I'M JUST HIS GRANDSON, AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE HE IS, LET ALONE WHAT HIS PLANS ARE FOR THE NEXT WEEK.

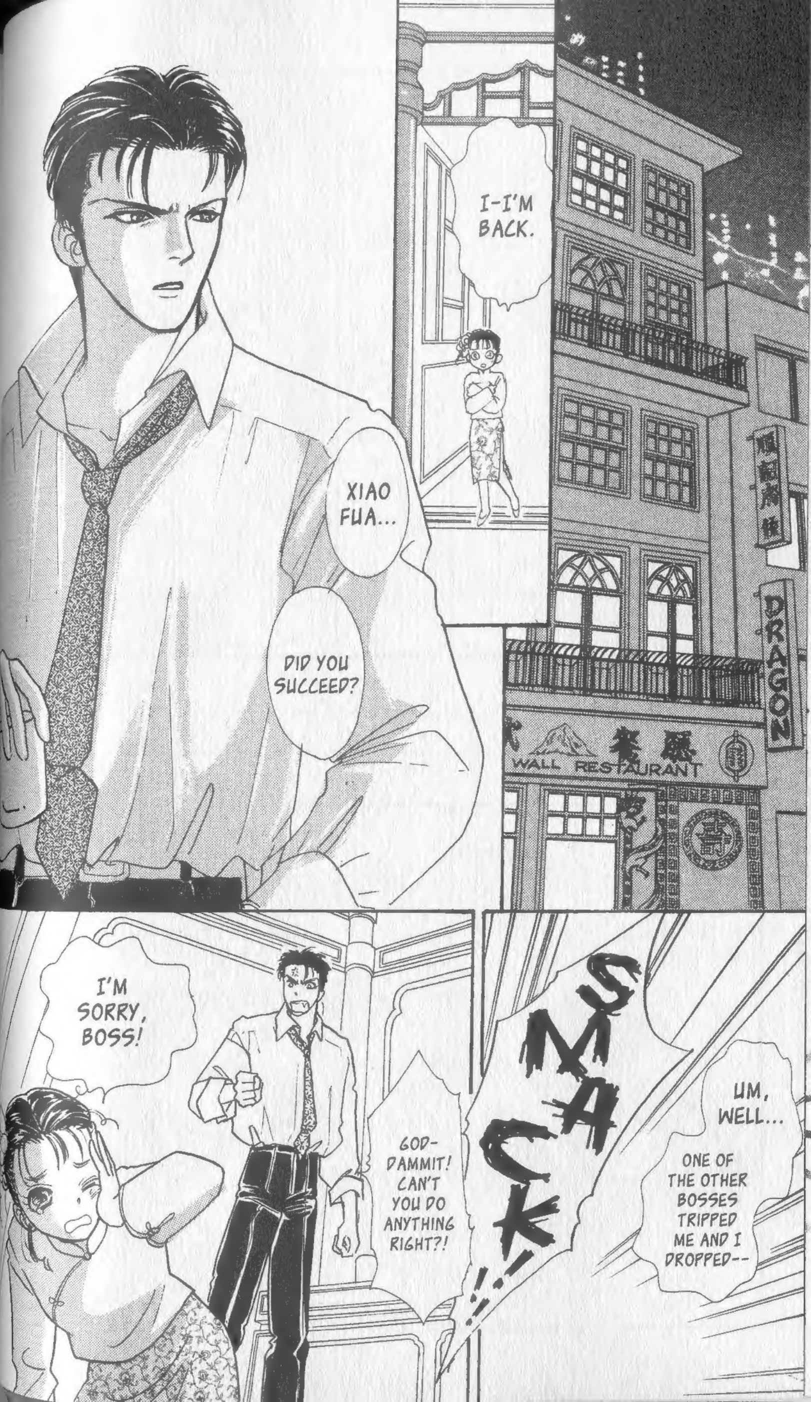

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
S- SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO...
BUT YOU'RE JUST A CHILD.
I-I'M HERE ON BEHALF OF LAO TA WEI.
YOU MADE THESE YOURSELF?
WELL... ...I HEARD THAT THE COUNT LIKED SWEETS.
COUNT D!
YOU DON'T WANT THOSE STALE CAKES.
I'VE BROUGHT YOU A DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR YOU BY THE CHEF AT THE RITZ CARLTON HOTEL.
YOU LIKE SWEETS? SO DOES MASTER SUNG! WHY, HE'LL TAKE YOU ON A CULINARY TOUR THAT'S TO DIE FOR!
THE WANS WILL BRING THE TOUR TO YOU!

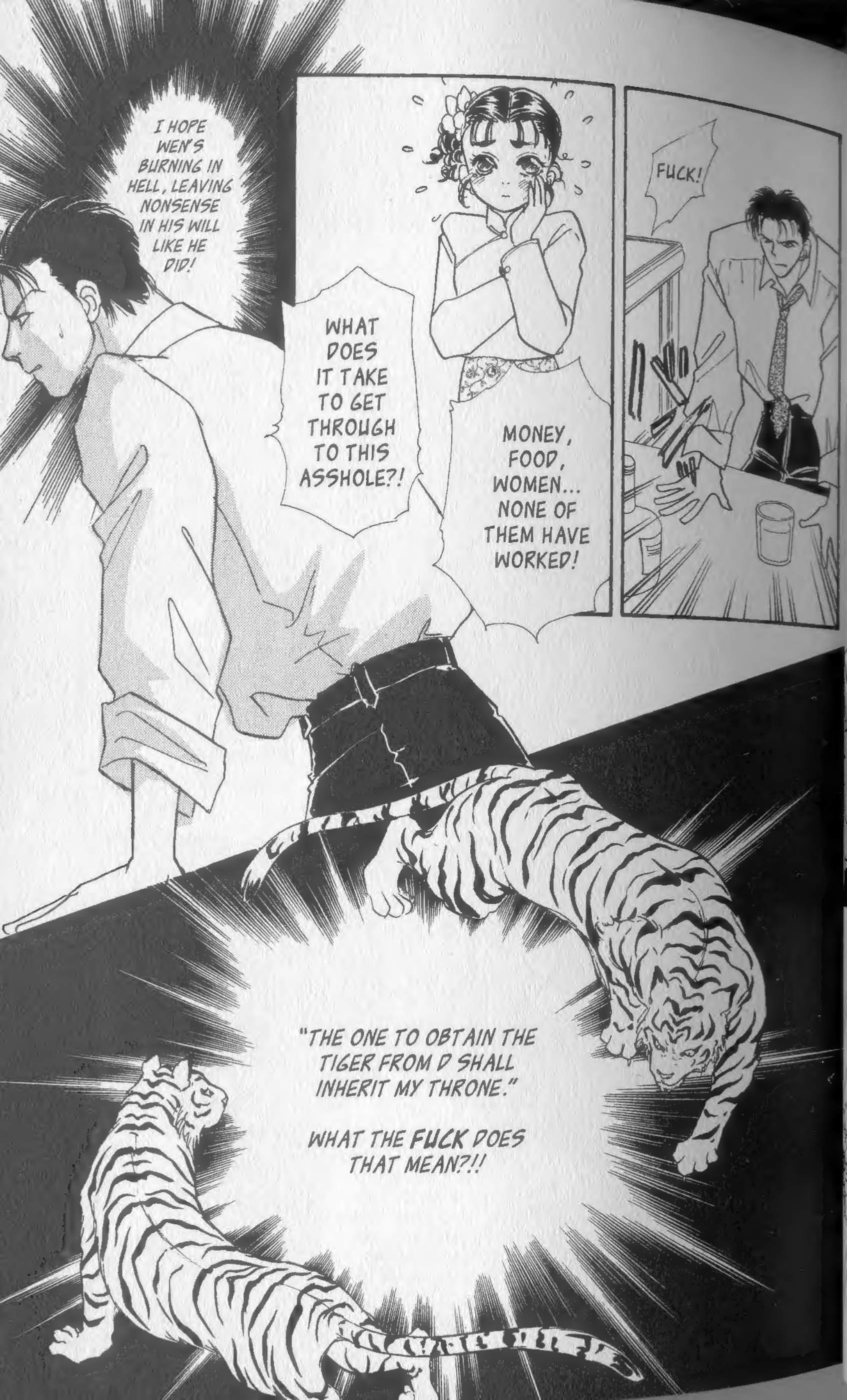

コポ
ポ
THE CHAIRMAN OF CHINATOWN'S LOCAL COUNCIL DIED A FEW DAYS AGO. HE WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF MY GRANDFATHER'S.
SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN HASSLED NON-STOP BY PEOPLE REPRESENTING ALL THE FAMILIES IN CHINATOWN. THEY COME BEARING GIFTS AND MAKING GRAND PROMISES. ALL TO OBTAIN A CERTAIN ITEM NECESSARY TO BECOME THE CHAIRMAN'S SUCCESSOR.
IT'S QUITE AGGRAVATING.
HMM...
HUH?!
WAIT A SEC!
ゴッキュン
RECENTLY DECEASED?
CHAIRMAN OF CHINATOWN'S COUNCIL?
YOU MEAN WAN KUO WEN? D, HE'S THE BOSS OF THE CHINESE MAFIA! OR RATHER, HE WAS.
飯店
家
公司
BONG! BONG!
His funeral was like a damn head of state's...

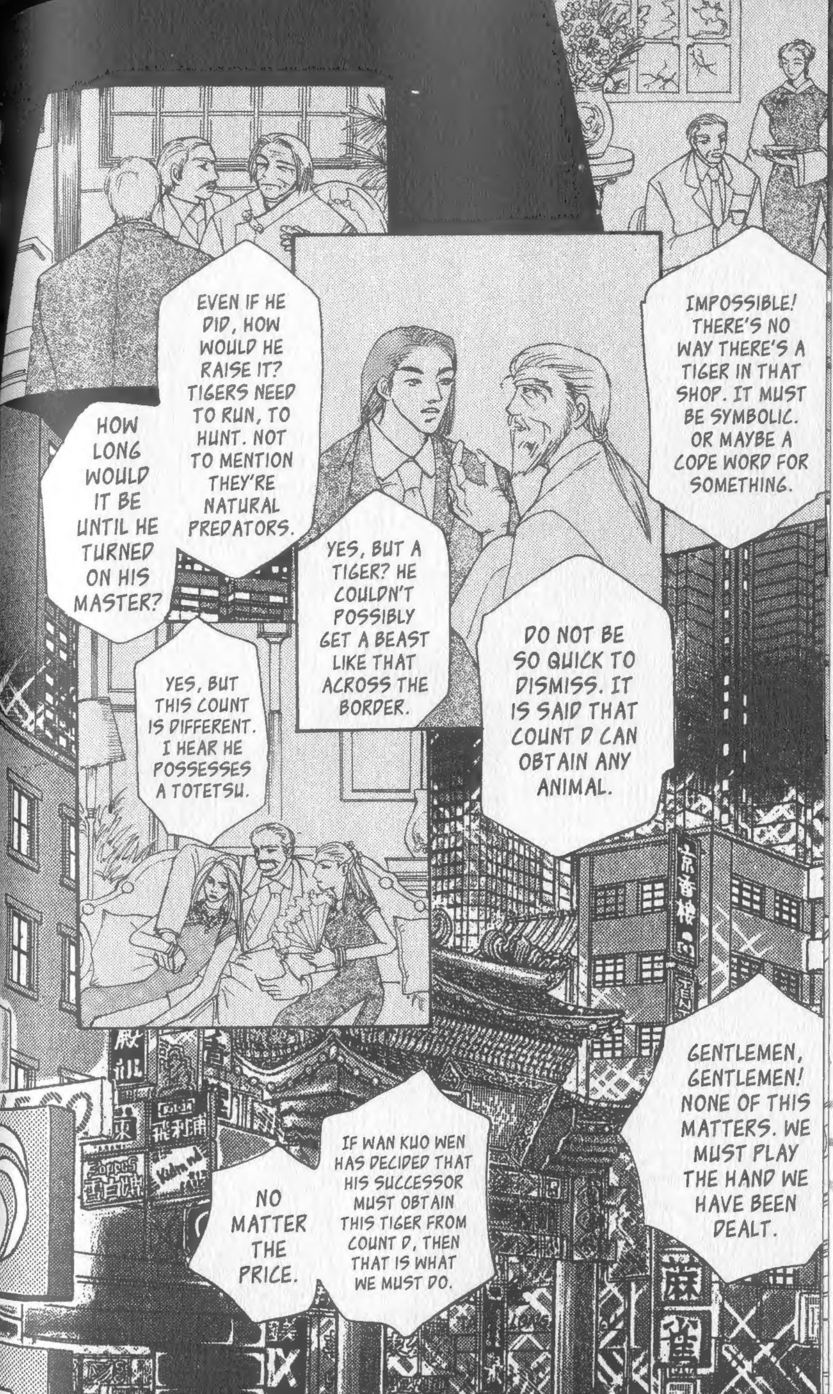

NEVER REALIZED YOU WERE SO POPULAR.
GONNA RUN FOR OFFICE?
ぎょっ
A BODYGUARD?
O, HE'S POLICE ETECTIVE.
DETECTIVE?
CONSIDERING THEY WERE TALKING TO YOU, MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE.
アヤシイヤツらだ
WHAT'S WITH THEM? YOU'D HAVE THOUGHT I PULLED MY GUN ON THEM.
HEY, BIG BRO!
DETECTIVE, WHAT WONDERFUL TIMING!
I was starting to get a headache.
HUH?
?
HEY, CHRIS.

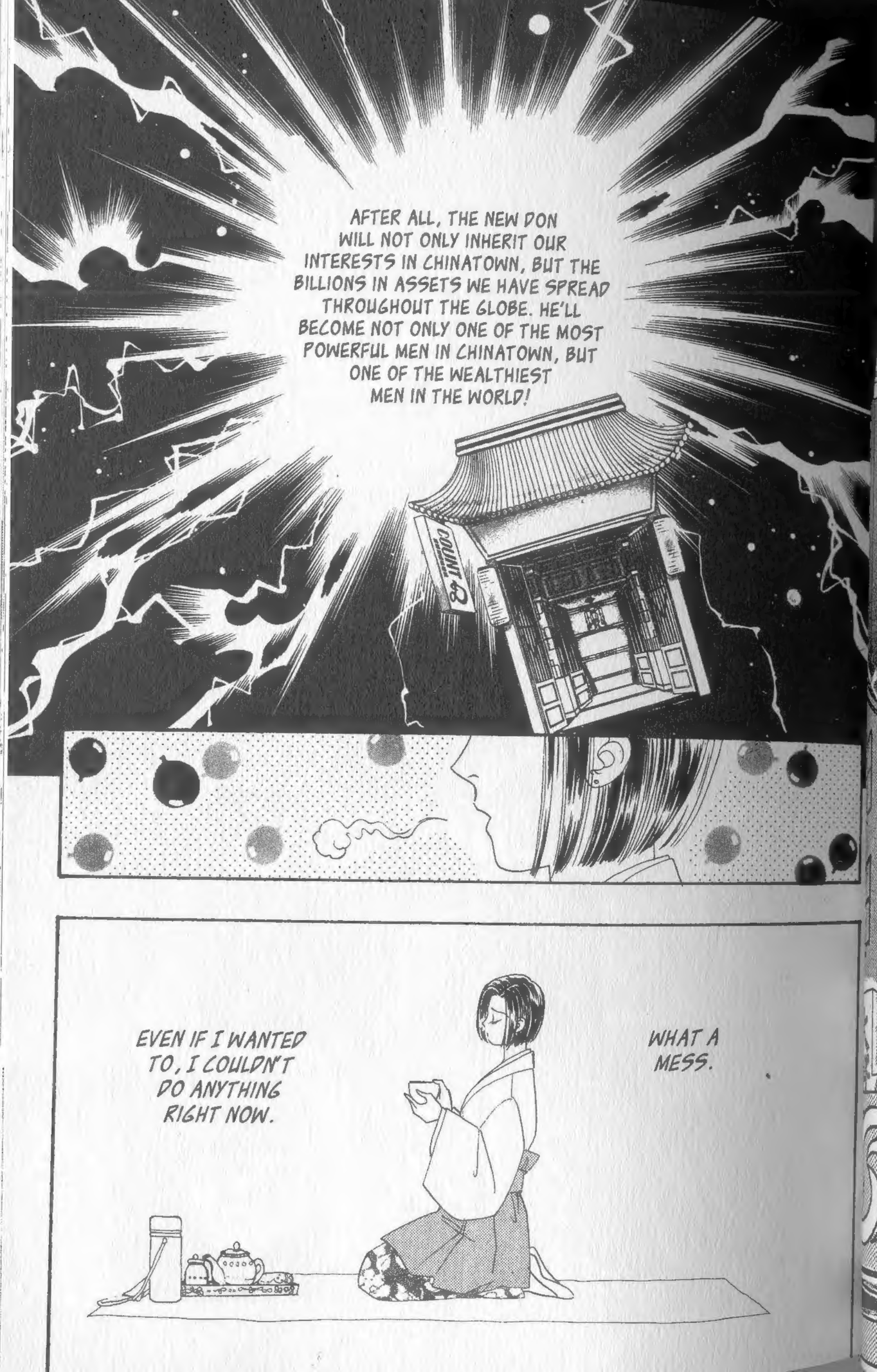

ALL RIGHT, D! WHAT SORT OF CONTRABAND ARE YOU HIDING NOW?!
IF EVERY POTENTIAL PLAYER IN CHINATOWN IS TRYING TO GET THEIR HANDS ON IT...
...IT MUST BE SOMETHING VALUABLE!
You have no idea...
DETECTIVE, IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A PET LENT OUT BY THE SHOP.
A CAT, TO BE PRECISE.
Albeit a pretty big one.
A CAT?! YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.
CAT
CAT
I'M AFRAID NOT, DETECTIVE. ALL THAT INSANITY YOU WITNESSED WAS FOR NOTHING MORE THAN A FELINE. AND IT ISN'T EVEN HOUSETRAINED.
I DON'T GET IT.
WHAT DOES THE CHINESE MOB WANT WITH A CAT?
IT'S GOTTEN SO BAD THAT I'VE BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE THE PET SHOP INDEFINITELY.
SOMETHING AIN'T RIGHT HERE.
GOOD THING I HAVE A NICE, STRONG POLICEMAN TO WATCH OUT FOR ME. IF YOU COULD BE SO KIND AS TO STAY WITH ME FOREVER, I'D BE SO ETERNALLY GRATEFUL, MR. DETECTIVE.
UH...

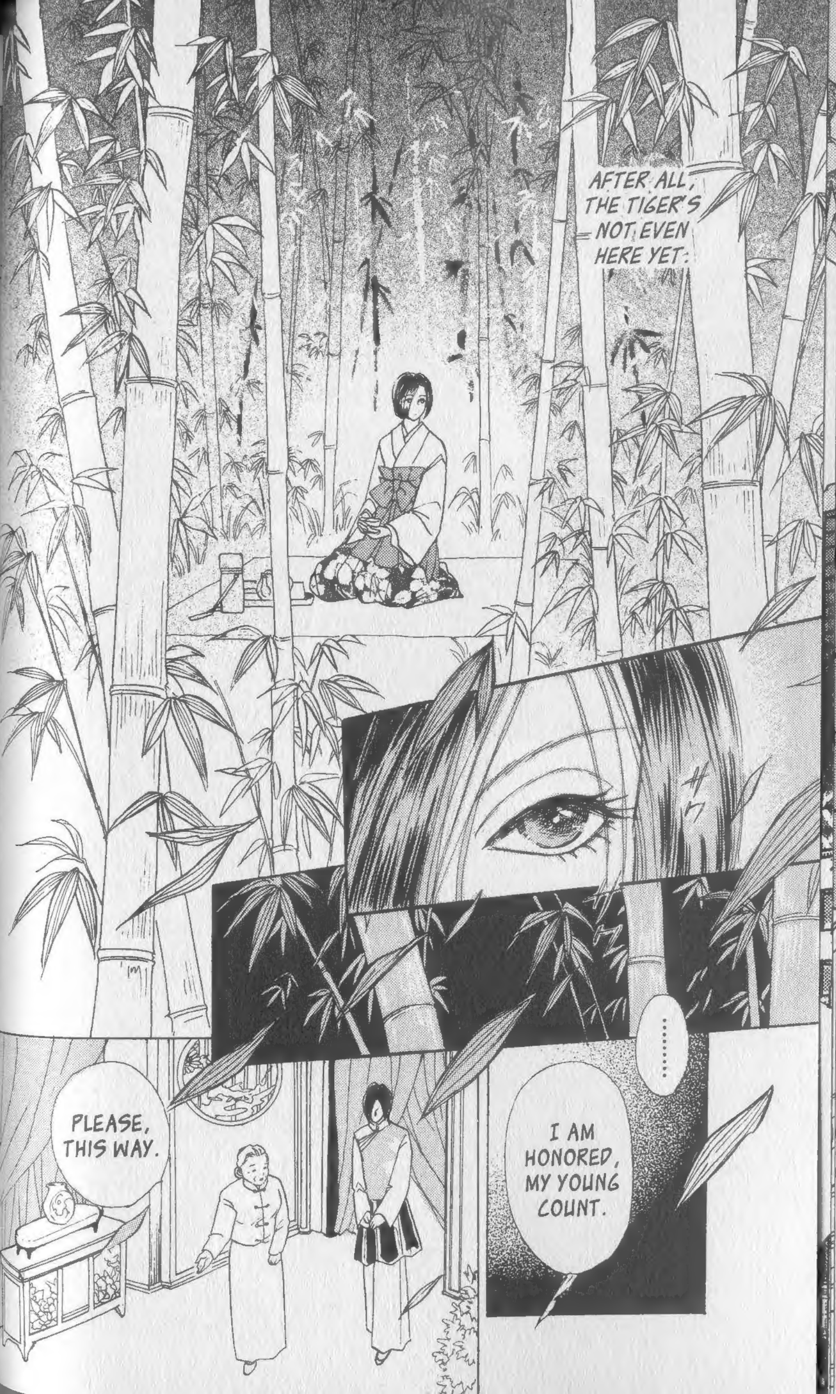

IT'S NOT POLICE POLICY TO INVOLVE OURSELVES IN CHINATOWN'S AFFAIRS.
See ya.
HMPH...
Like I really need his dirty laundry tossed all over my shop.
Came on a bit strong there, Count.
DON'T WORRY, COUNT!
I'LL PROTECT YOU!
......
Thank you, Chris.
I'm counting on you.

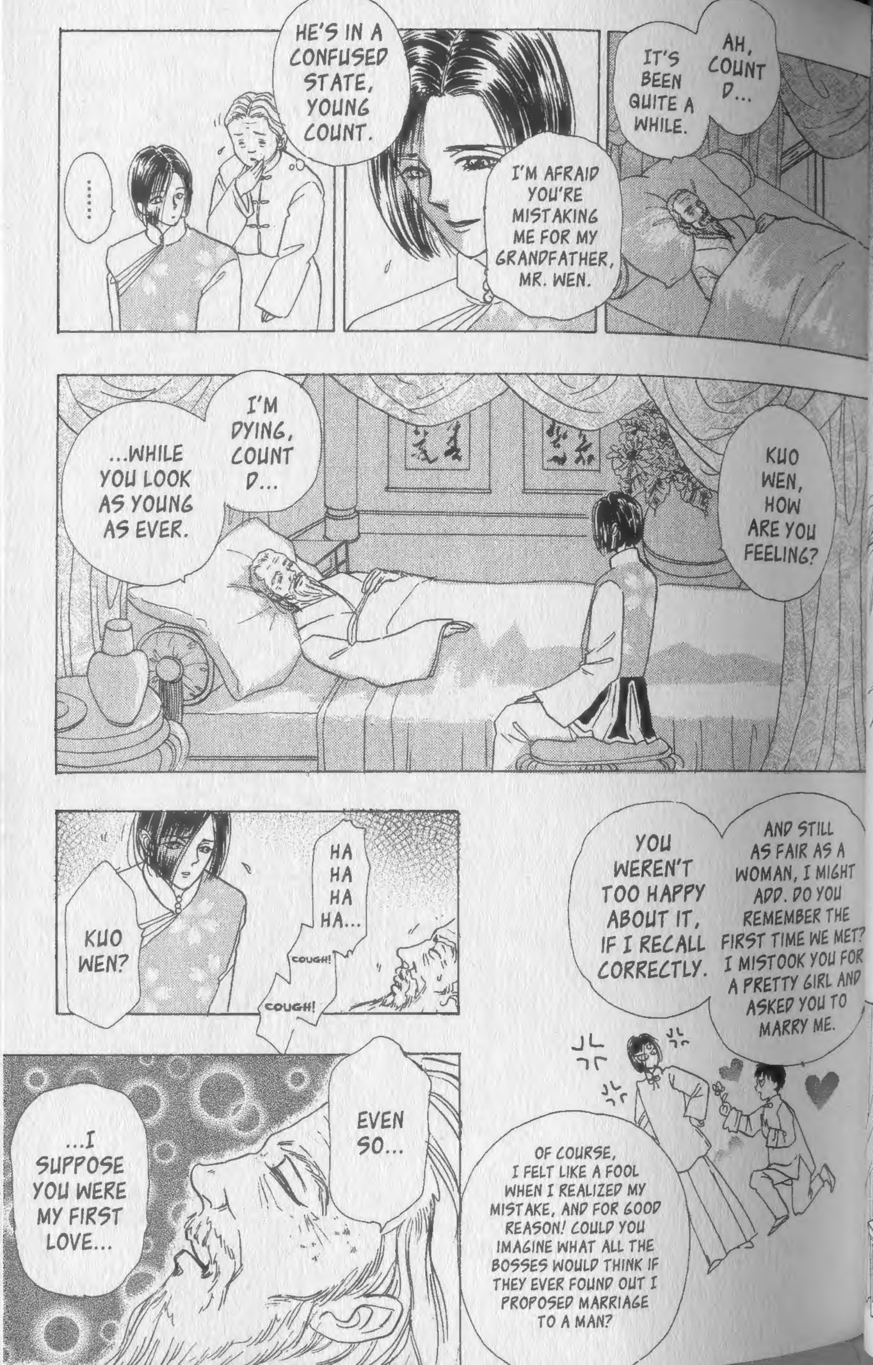

I-I'M BACK.
XIAO FUA...
DID YOU SUCCEED?
DRAGON
WALL RESTAURANT
UM, WELL...
ONE OF THE OTHER BOSSES TRIPPED ME AND I DROPPED--
SMACK!!
GOD-DAMMIT! CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING RIGHT?!
I'M SORRY, BOSS!

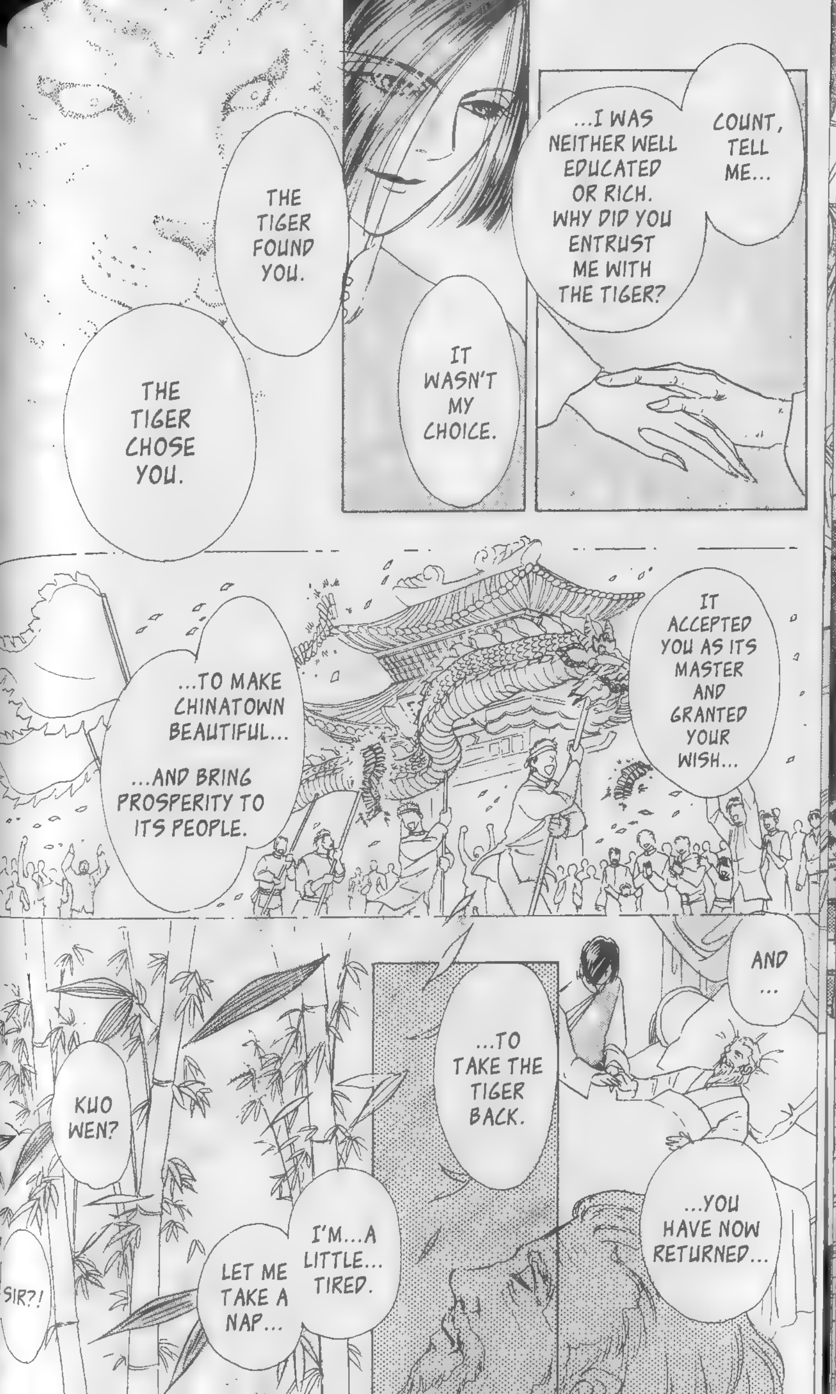

FUCK!
I HOPE WEN'S BURNING IN HELL, LEAVING NONSENSE IN HIS WILL LIKE HE DID!
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET THROUGH TO THIS ASSHOLE?!
MONEY, FOOD, WOMEN... NONE OF THEM HAVE WORKED!
"THE ONE TO OBTAIN THE TIGER FROM D SHALL INHERIT MY THRONE."
WHAT THE FUCK DOES THAT MEAN?!!

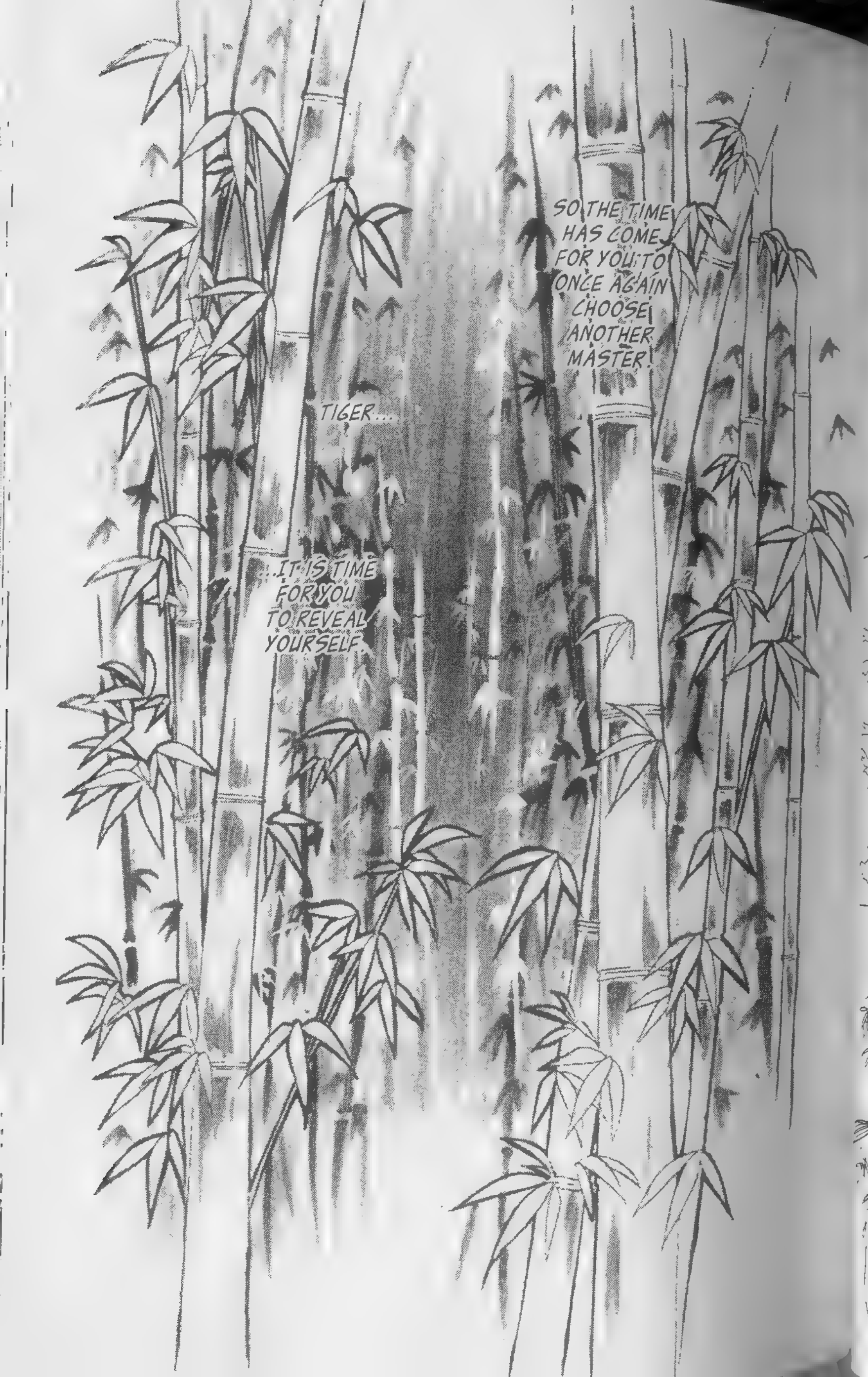

IMPOSSIBLE! THERE'S NO WAY THERE'S A TIGER IN THAT SHOP. IT MUST BE SYMBOLIC. OR MAYBE A CODE WORD FOR SOMETHING.
EVEN IF HE DID, HOW WOULD HE RAISE IT? TIGERS NEED TO RUN, TO HUNT. NOT TO MENTION THEY'RE NATURAL PREDATORS.
HOW LONG WOULD IT BE UNTIL HE TURNED ON HIS MASTER?
YES, BUT A TIGER? HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY GET A BEAST LIKE THAT ACROSS THE BORDER.
DO NOT BE SO QUICK TO DISMISS. IT IS SAID THAT COUNT D CAN OBTAIN ANY ANIMAL.
YES, BUT THIS COUNT IS DIFFERENT. I HEAR HE POSSESSES A TOTETSU.
GENTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN! NONE OF THIS MATTERS. WE MUST PLAY THE HAND WE HAVE BEEN DEALT.
IF WAN KUO WEN HAS DECIDED THAT HIS SUCCESSOR MUST OBTAIN THIS TIGER FROM COUNT D, THEN THAT IS WHAT WE MUST DO.
NO MATTER THE PRICE.

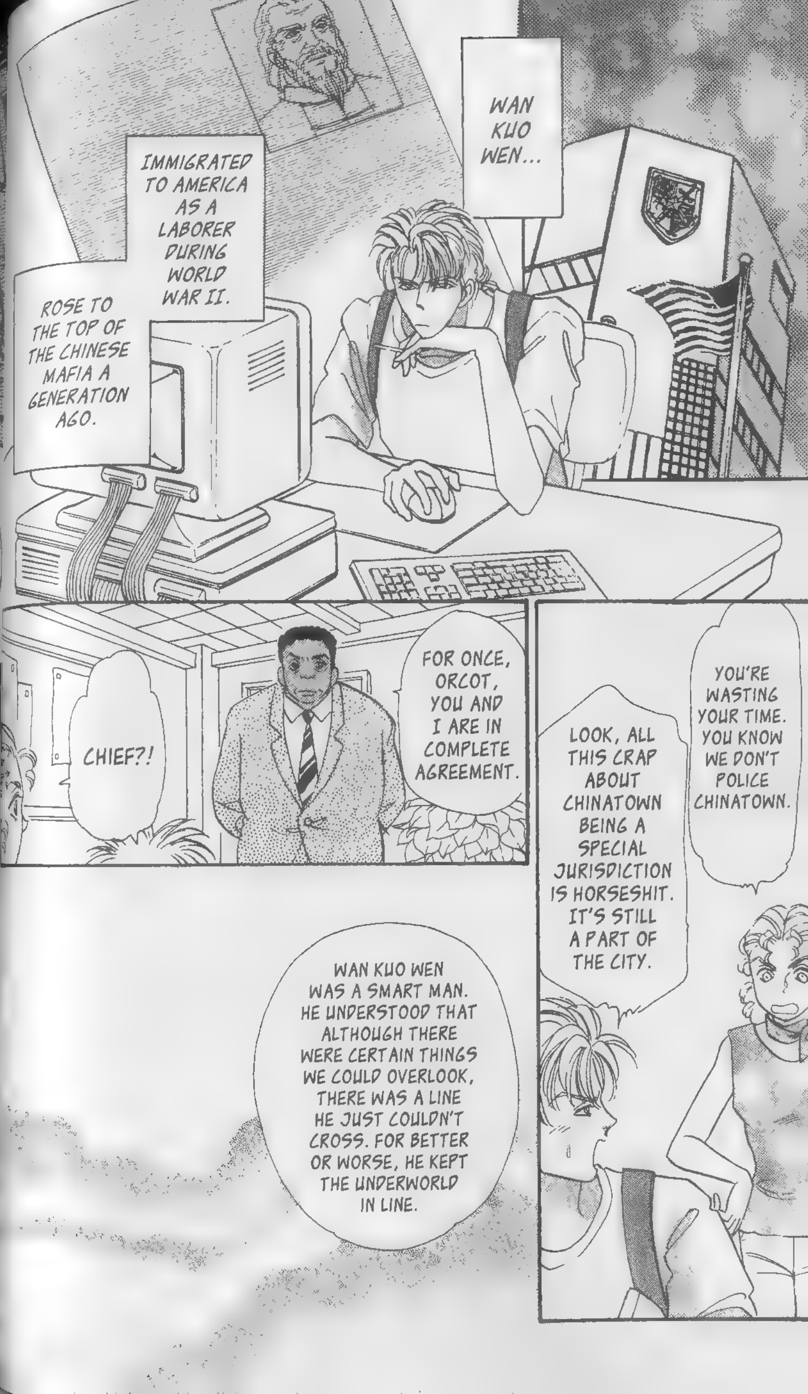

AFTER ALL, THE NEW DON WILL NOT ONLY INHERIT OUR INTERESTS IN CHINATOWN, BUT THE BILLIONS IN ASSETS WE HAVE SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE. HE'LL BECOME NOT ONLY ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MEN IN CHINATOWN, BUT ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST MEN IN THE WORLD!
COUNT D
WHAT A MESS.
EVEN IF I WANTED TO, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING RIGHT NOW.

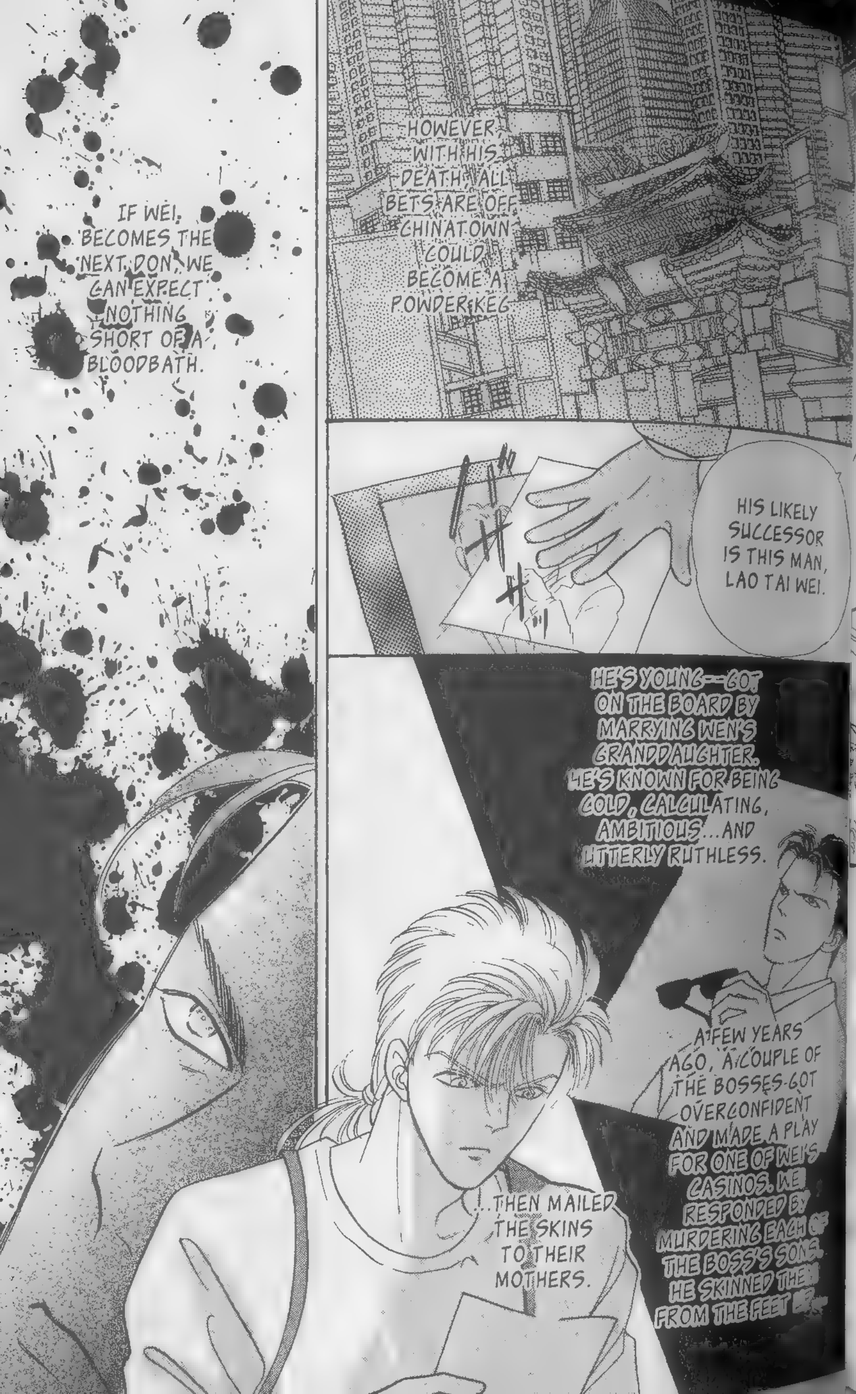

AFTER ALL, THE TIGER'S NOT EVEN HERE YET.
......
I AM HONORED, MY YOUNG COUNT.
PLEASE, THIS WAY.

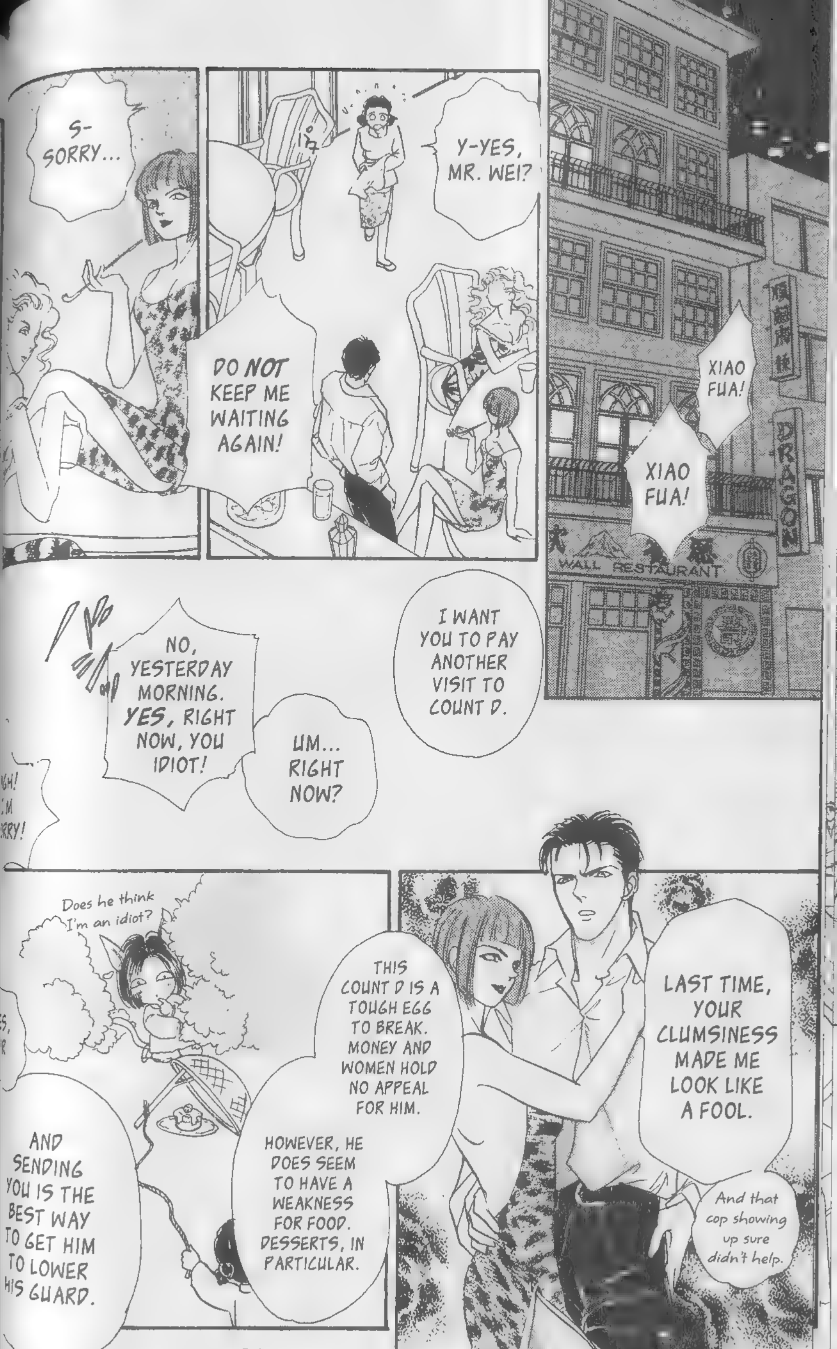

AH, COUNT D...
IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE.
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MISTAKING ME FOR MY GRANDFATHER, MR. WEN.
HE'S IN A CONFUSED STATE, YOUNG COUNT.
......
KUO WEN, HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
I'M DYING, COUNT D...
...WHILE YOU LOOK AS YOUNG AS EVER.
AND STILL AS FAIR AS A WOMAN, I MIGHT ADD. DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME WE MET? I MISTOOK YOU FOR A PRETTY GIRL AND ASKED YOU TO MARRY ME.
YOU WEREN'T TOO HAPPY ABOUT IT, IF I RECALL CORRECTLY.
HA HA HA HA...
COUGH!
COUGH!
KUO WEN?
OF COURSE, I FELT LIKE A FOOL WHEN I REALIZED MY MISTAKE, AND FOR GOOD REASON! COULD YOU IMAGINE WHAT ALL THE BOSSES WOULD THINK IF THEY EVER FOUND OUT I PROPOSED MARRIAGE TO A MAN?
EVEN SO...
...I SUPPOSE YOU WERE MY FIRST LOVE...

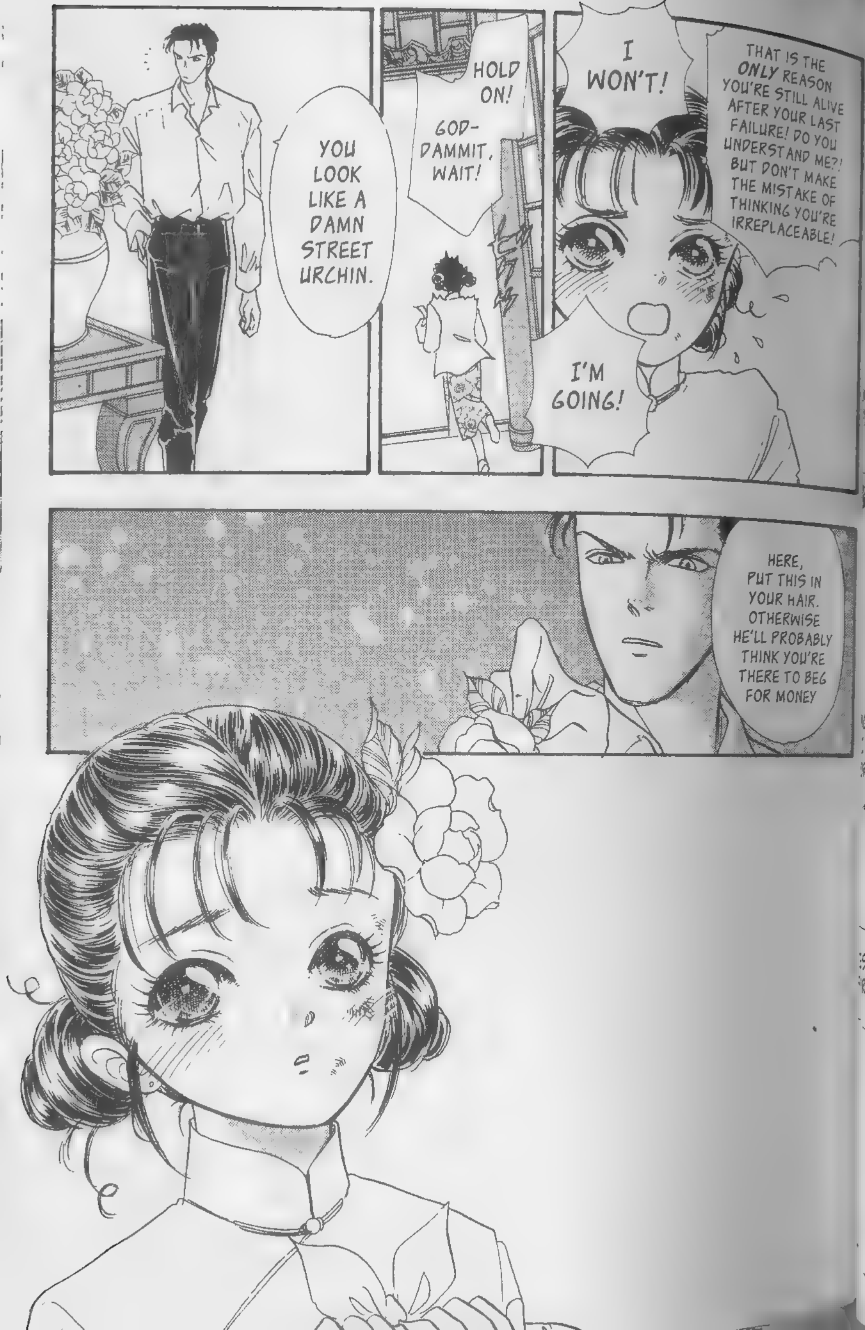

COUNT, TELL ME...
...I WAS NEITHER WELL EDUCATED OR RICH. WHY DID YOU ENTRUST ME WITH THE TIGER?
IT WASN'T MY CHOICE.
THE TIGER FOUND YOU.
THE TIGER CHOSE YOU.
IT ACCEPTED YOU AS ITS MASTER AND GRANTED YOUR WISH...
...TO MAKE CHINATOWN BEAUTIFUL...
...AND BRING PROSPERITY TO ITS PEOPLE.
AND...
...YOU HAVE NOW RETURNED...
...TO TAKE THE TIGER BACK.
I'M...A LITTLE... TIRED.
LET ME TAKE A NAP...
KUO WEN?
SIR?!

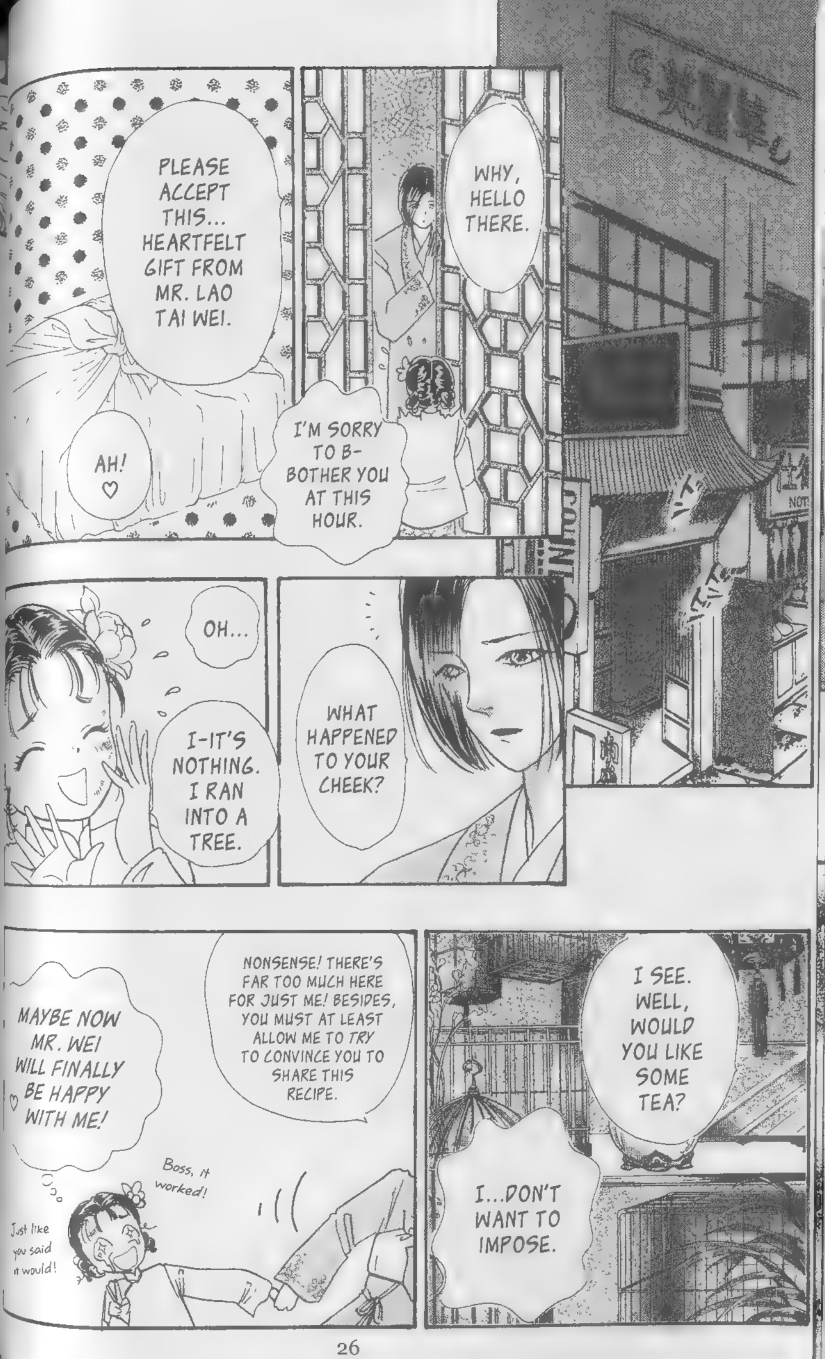

SO THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO ONCE AGAIN CHOOSE ANOTHER MASTER!
TIGER...
...IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO REVEAL YOURSELF.

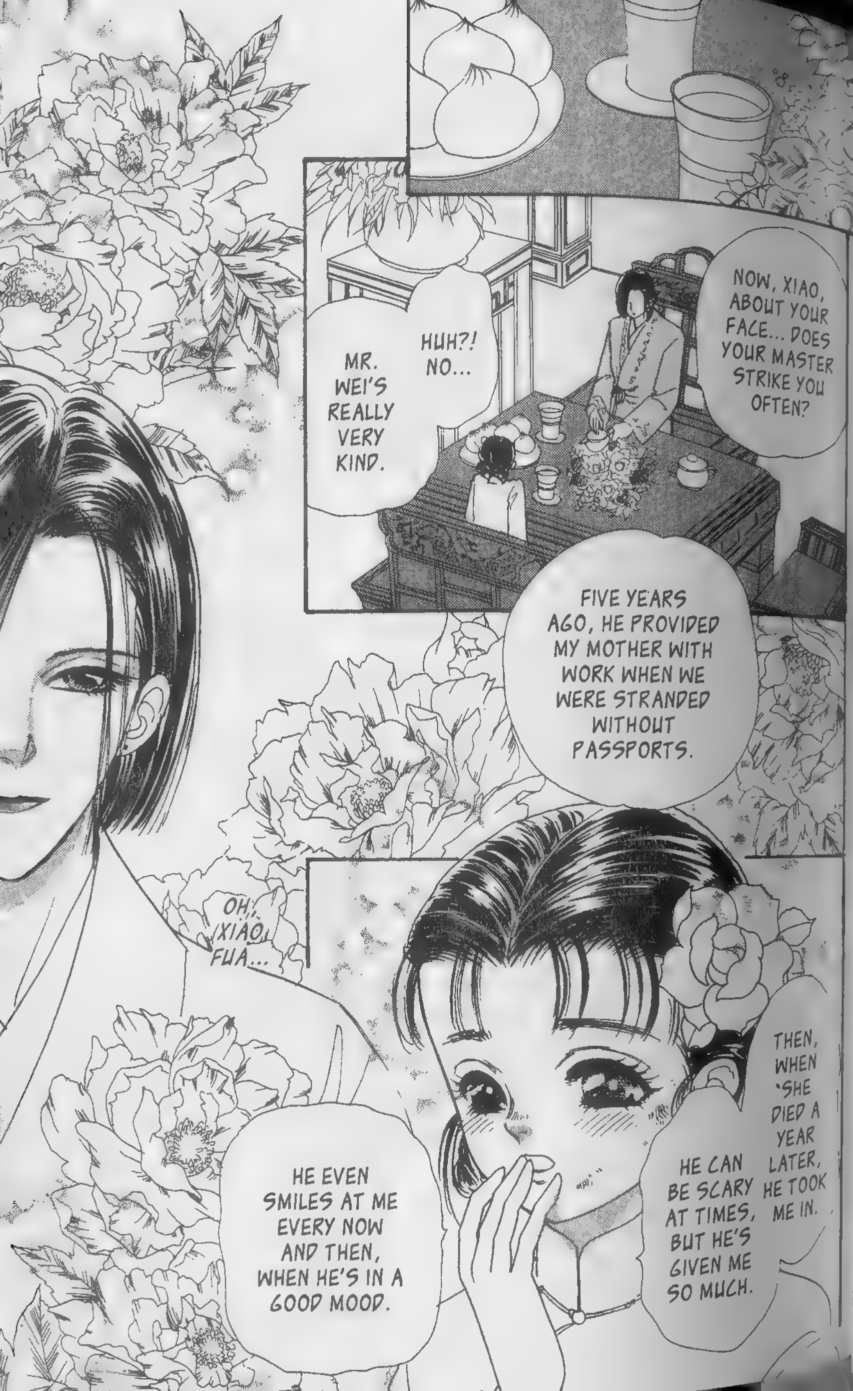

WAN KUO WEN...
IMMIGRATED TO AMERICA AS A LABORER DURING WORLD WAR II.
ROSE TO THE TOP OF THE CHINESE MAFIA A GENERATION AGO.
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME. YOU KNOW WE DON'T POLICE CHINATOWN.
LOOK, ALL THIS CRAP ABOUT CHINATOWN BEING A SPECIAL JURISDICTION IS HORSESHIT. IT'S STILL A PART OF THE CITY.
FOR ONCE, ORCOT, YOU AND I ARE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT.
CHIEF?!
WAN KUO WEN WAS A SMART MAN. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE CERTAIN THINGS WE COULD OVERLOOK, THERE WAS A LINE HE JUST COULDN'T CROSS. FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HE KEPT THE UNDERWORLD IN LINE.

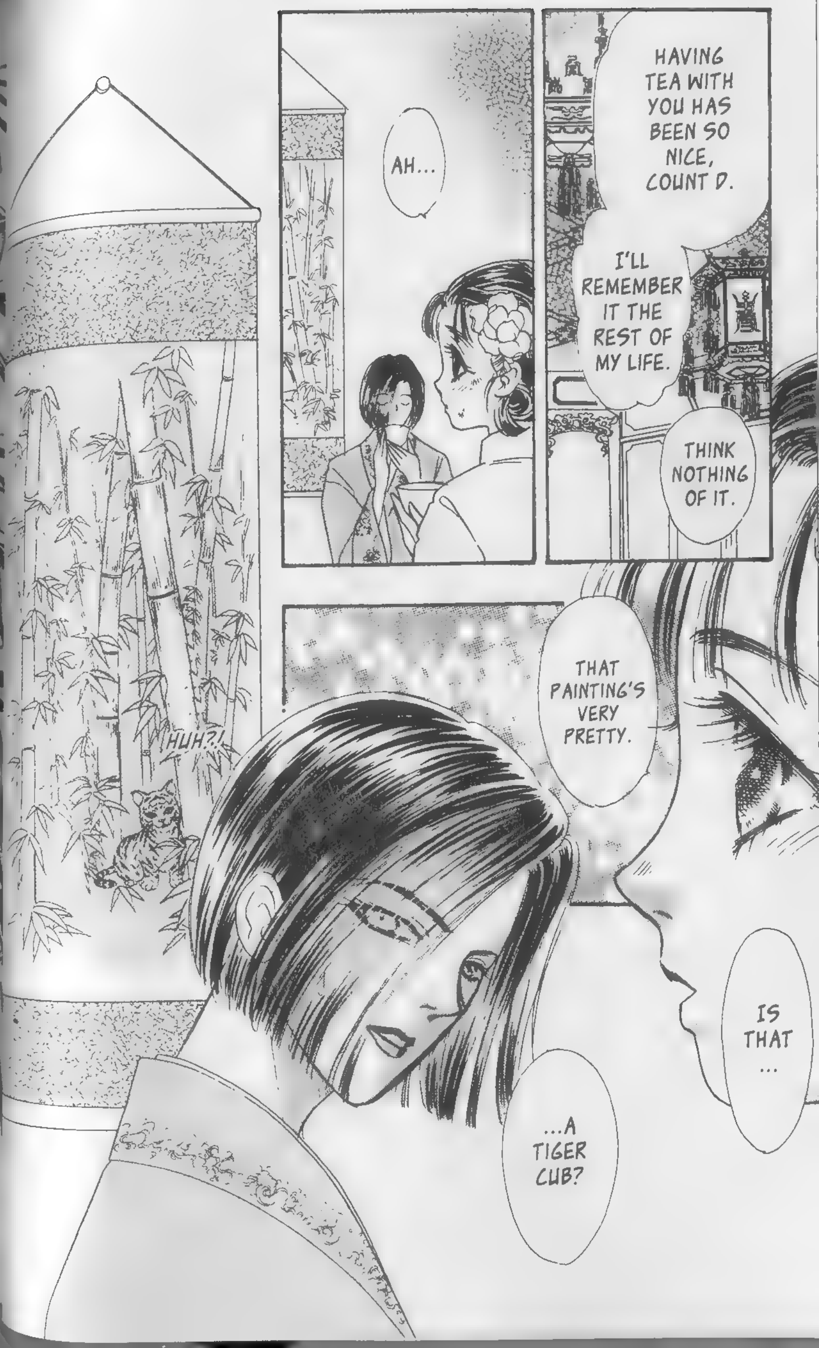

HOWEVER, WITH HIS DEATH, ALL BETS ARE OFF. CHINATOWN COULD BECOME A POWDER KEG.
HIS LIKELY SUCCESSOR IS THIS MAN, LAO TAI WEI.
HE'S YOUNG--GOT ON THE BOARD BY MARRYING WEN'S GRANDDAUGHTER. HE'S KNOWN FOR BEING COLD, CALCULATING, AMBITIOUS...AND UTTERLY RUTHLESS.
A FEW YEARS AGO, A COUPLE OF THE BOSSES GOT OVERCONFIDENT AND MADE A PLAY FOR ONE OF WEI'S CASINOS. WE RESPONDED BY MURDERING EACH OF THE BOSS'S SONS. HE SKINNED THEM FROM THE FEET UP...
...THEN MAILED THE SKINS TO THEIR MOTHERS.
IF WEI BECOMES THE NEXT DON, WE CAN EXPECT NOTHING SHORT OF A BLOODBATH.

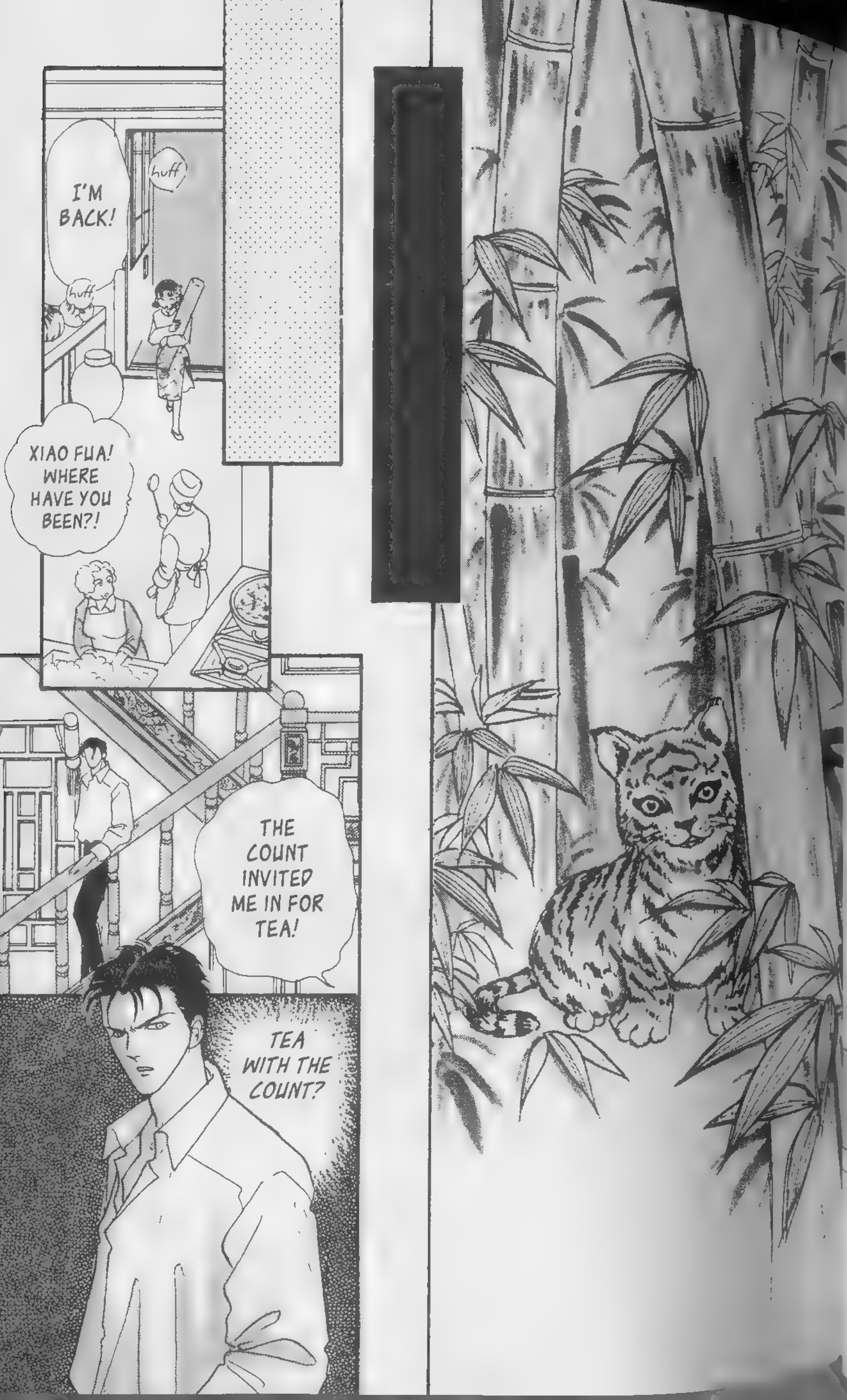

DRAGON
WALL RESTAURANT
XIAO FUA!
XIAO FUA!
Y-YES, MR. WEI?
S-SORRY...
DO **NOT** KEEP ME WAITING AGAIN!
I WANT YOU TO PAY ANOTHER VISIT TO COUNT D.
UM... RIGHT NOW?
NO, YESTERDAY MORNING. **YES,** RIGHT NOW, YOU IDIOT!
GH! 'M RRY!
LAST TIME, YOUR CLUMSINESS MADE ME LOOK LIKE A FOOL.
And that cop showing up sure didn't help.
THIS COUNT D IS A TOUGH EGG TO BREAK. MONEY AND WOMEN HOLD NO APPEAL FOR HIM.
HOWEVER, HE DOES SEEM TO HAVE A WEAKNESS FOR FOOD. DESSERTS, IN PARTICULAR.
AND SENDING YOU IS THE BEST WAY TO GET HIM TO LOWER HIS GUARD.
Does he think I'm an idiot?
ES, R

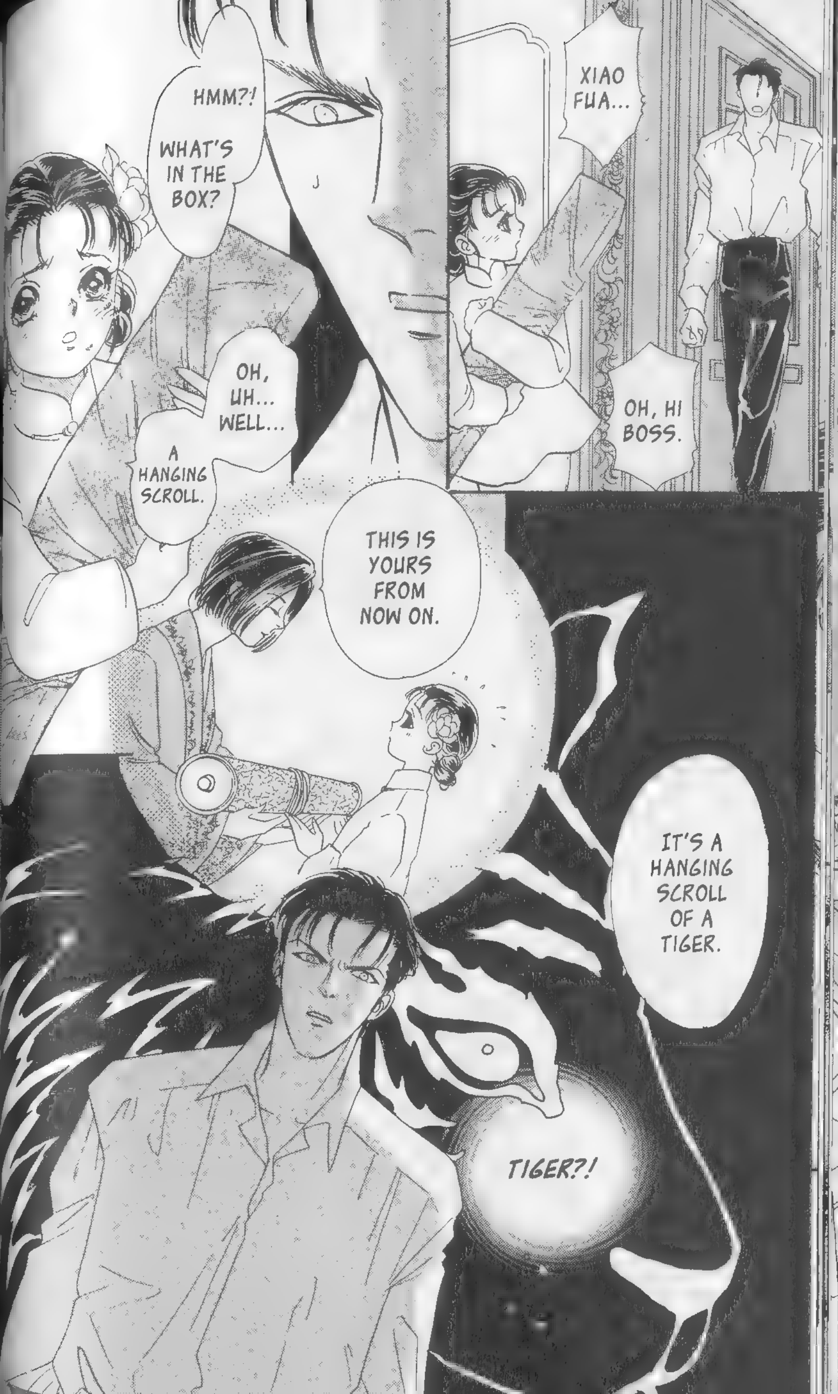

I WON'T!
THAT IS THE **ONLY** REASON YOU'RE STILL ALIVE AFTER YOUR LAST FAILURE! DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?! BUT DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE OF THINKING YOU'RE IRREPLACEABLE!
I'M GOING!
HOLD ON!
GOD-DAMMIT, WAIT!
YOU LOOK LIKE A DAMN STREET URCHIN.
HERE, PUT THIS IN YOUR HAIR. OTHERWISE HE'LL PROBABLY THINK YOU'RE THERE TO BEG FOR MONEY

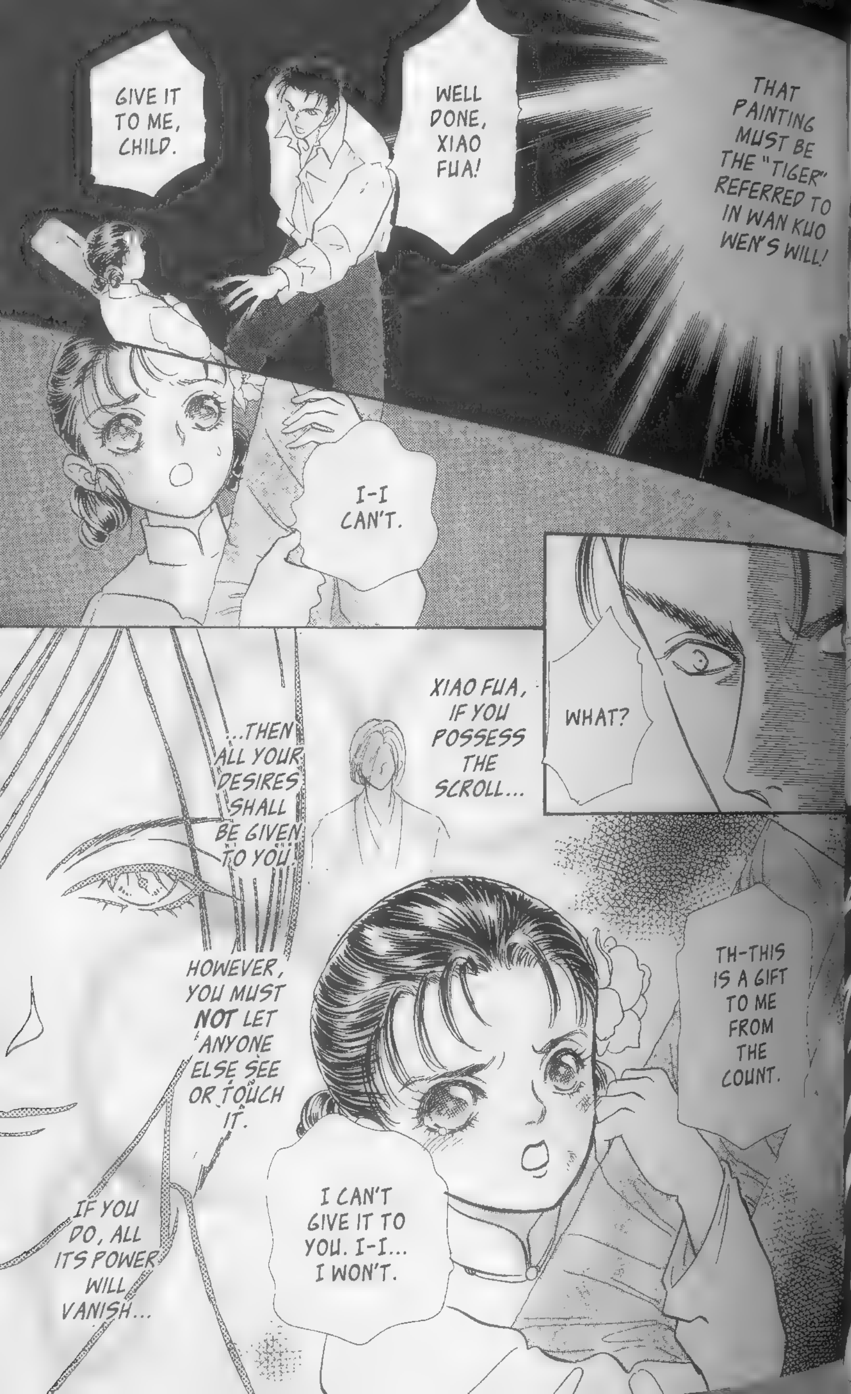

WHY, HELLO THERE.
I'M SORRY TO B-BOTHER YOU AT THIS HOUR.
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS... HEARTFELT GIFT FROM MR. LAO TAI WEI.
AH! ♡
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR CHEEK?
OH...
I-IT'S NOTHING. I RAN INTO A TREE.
I SEE. WELL, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA?
I...DON'T WANT TO IMPOSE.
NONSENSE! THERE'S FAR TOO MUCH HERE FOR JUST ME! BESIDES, YOU MUST AT LEAST ALLOW ME TO *TRY* TO CONVINCE YOU TO SHARE THIS RECIPE.
MAYBE NOW MR. WEI WILL FINALLY BE HAPPY WITH ME! ♡
Boss, it worked!
Just like you said it would!

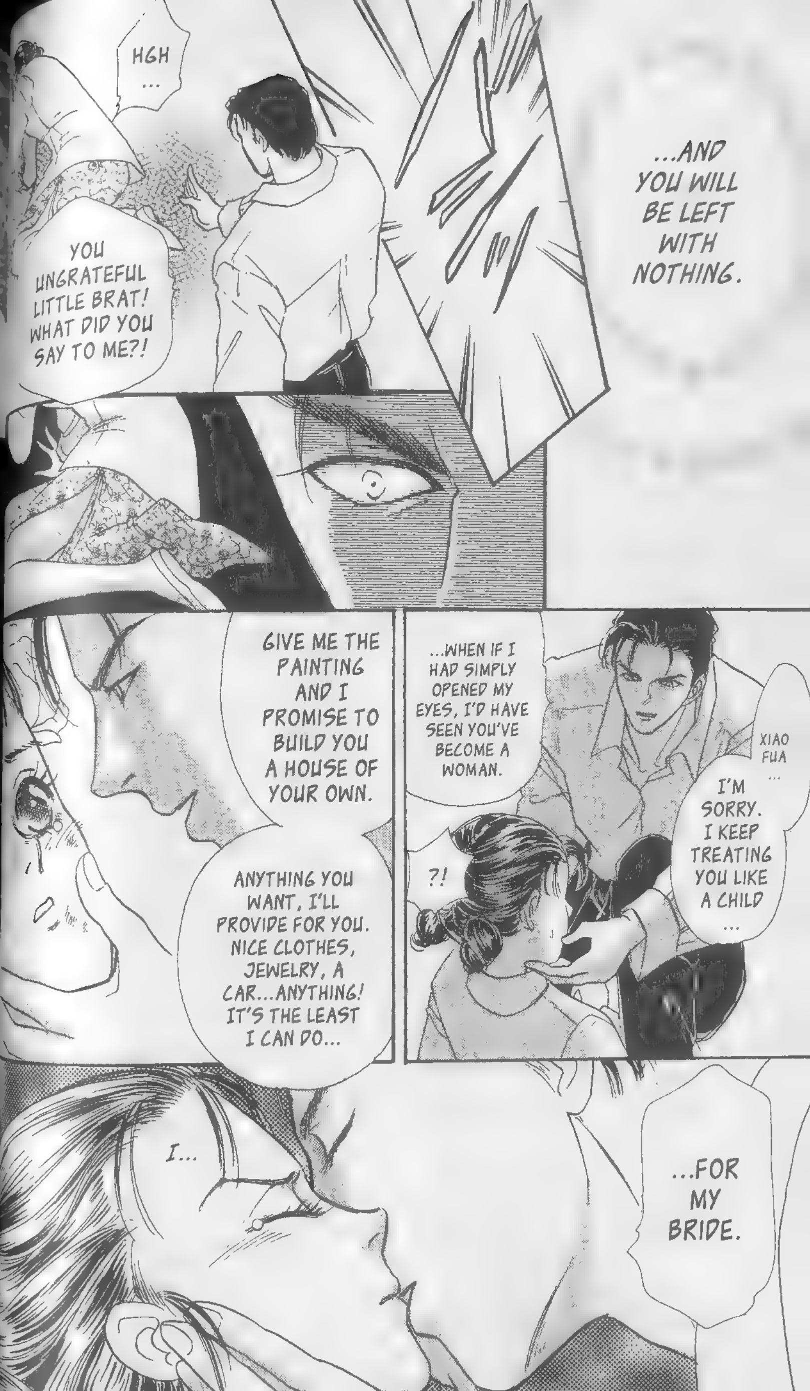

NOW, XIAO, ABOUT YOUR FACE... DOES YOUR MASTER STRIKE YOU OFTEN?
HUH?! NO...
MR. WEI'S REALLY VERY KIND.
FIVE YEARS AGO, HE PROVIDED MY MOTHER WITH WORK WHEN WE WERE STRANDED WITHOUT PASSPORTS.
THEN, WHEN SHE DIED A YEAR LATER, HE TOOK ME IN.
HE CAN BE SCARY AT TIMES, BUT HE'S GIVEN ME SO MUCH.
HE EVEN SMILES AT ME EVERY NOW AND THEN, WHEN HE'S IN A GOOD MOOD.
OH, XIAO FUA...

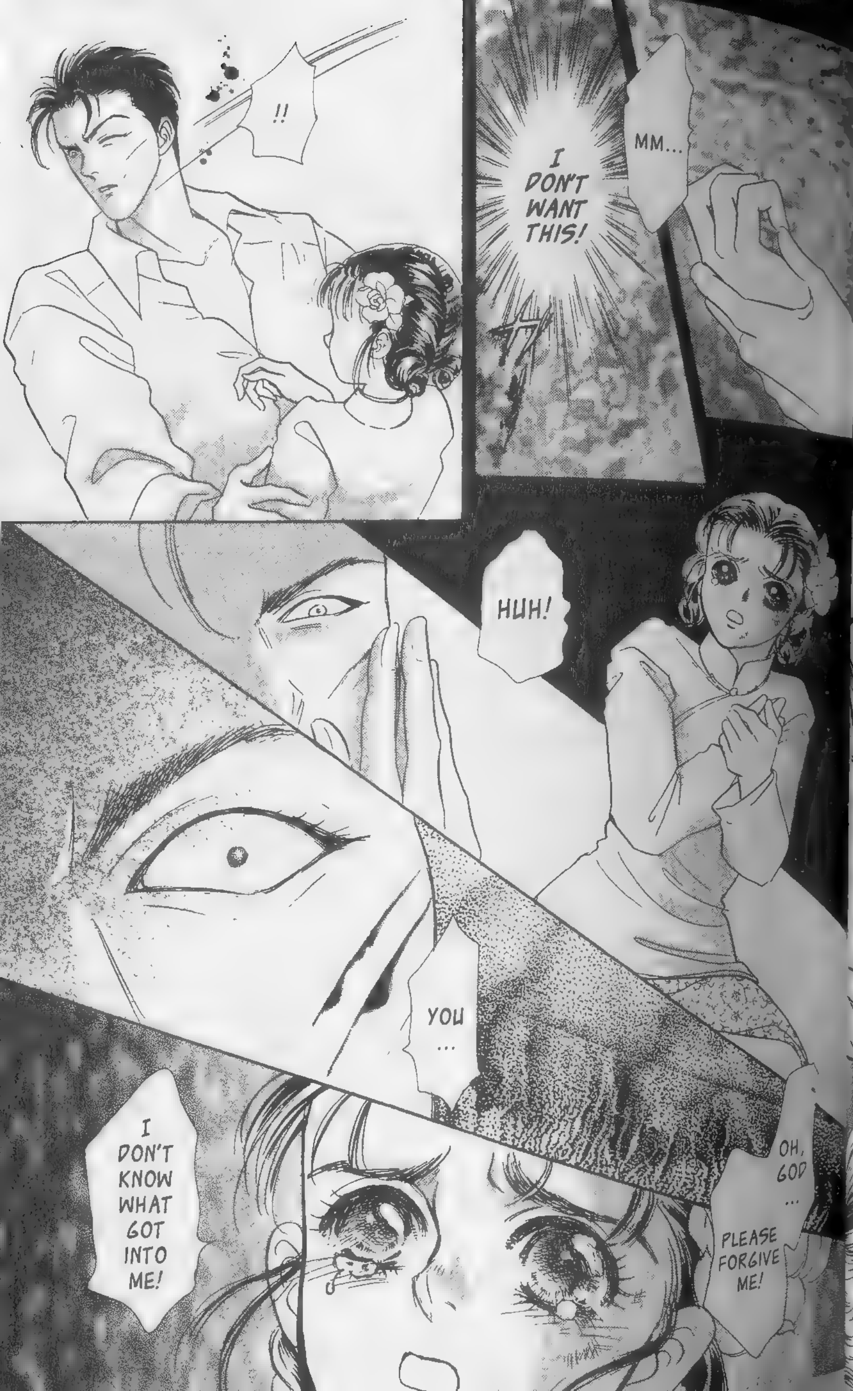

HAVING TEA WITH YOU HAS BEEN SO NICE, COUNT D.
I'LL REMEMBER IT THE REST OF MY LIFE.
THINK NOTHING OF IT.
AH...
THAT PAINTING'S VERY PRETTY.
IS THAT ...
...A TIGER CUB?
HUH?!

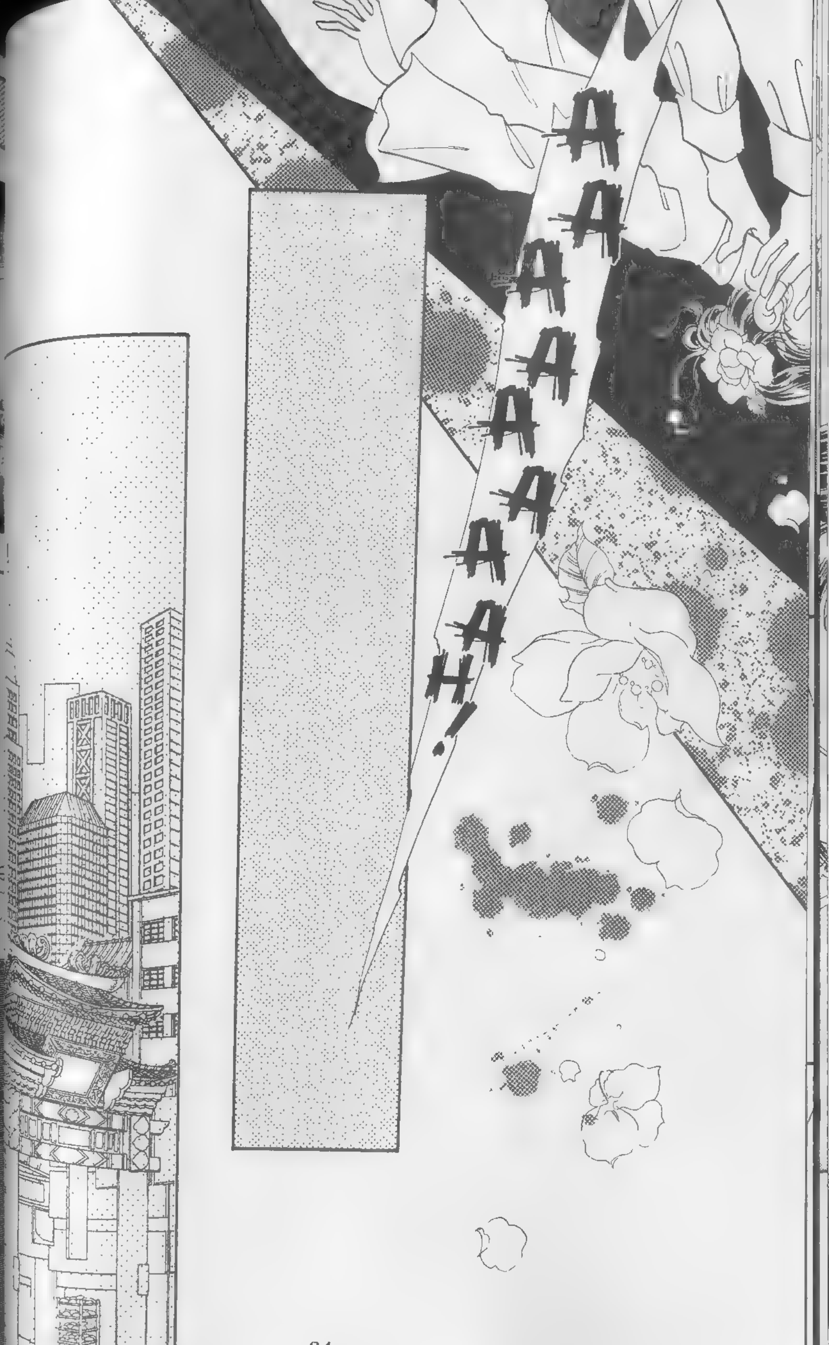

huff
I'M BACK!
huff
XIAO FUA! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?!
THE COUNT INVITED ME IN FOR TEA!
TEA WITH THE COUNT?

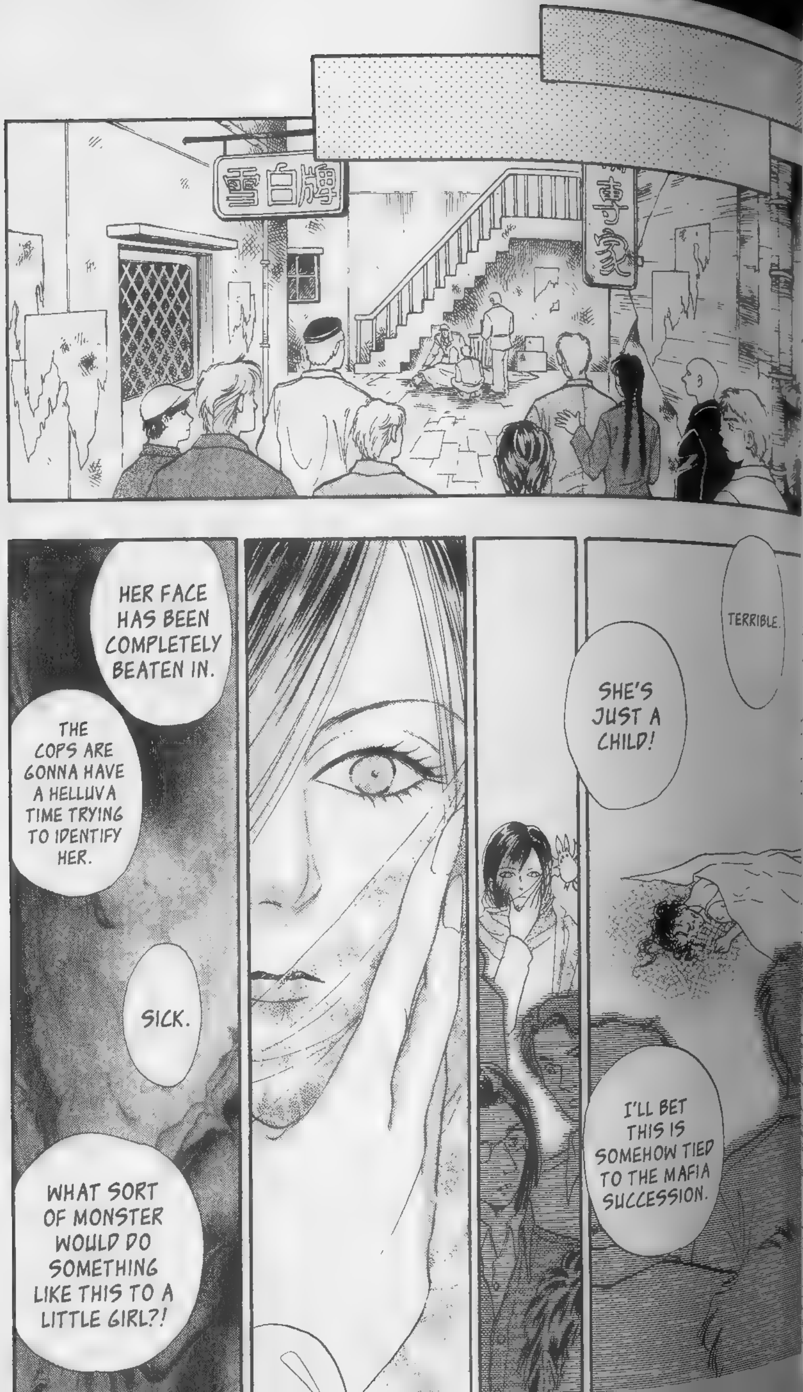

XIAO FUA...
OH, HI BOSS.
HMM?!
WHAT'S IN THE BOX?
OH, UH... WELL...
A HANGING SCROLL.
THIS IS YOURS FROM NOW ON.
IT'S A HANGING SCROLL OF A TIGER.
TIGER?!

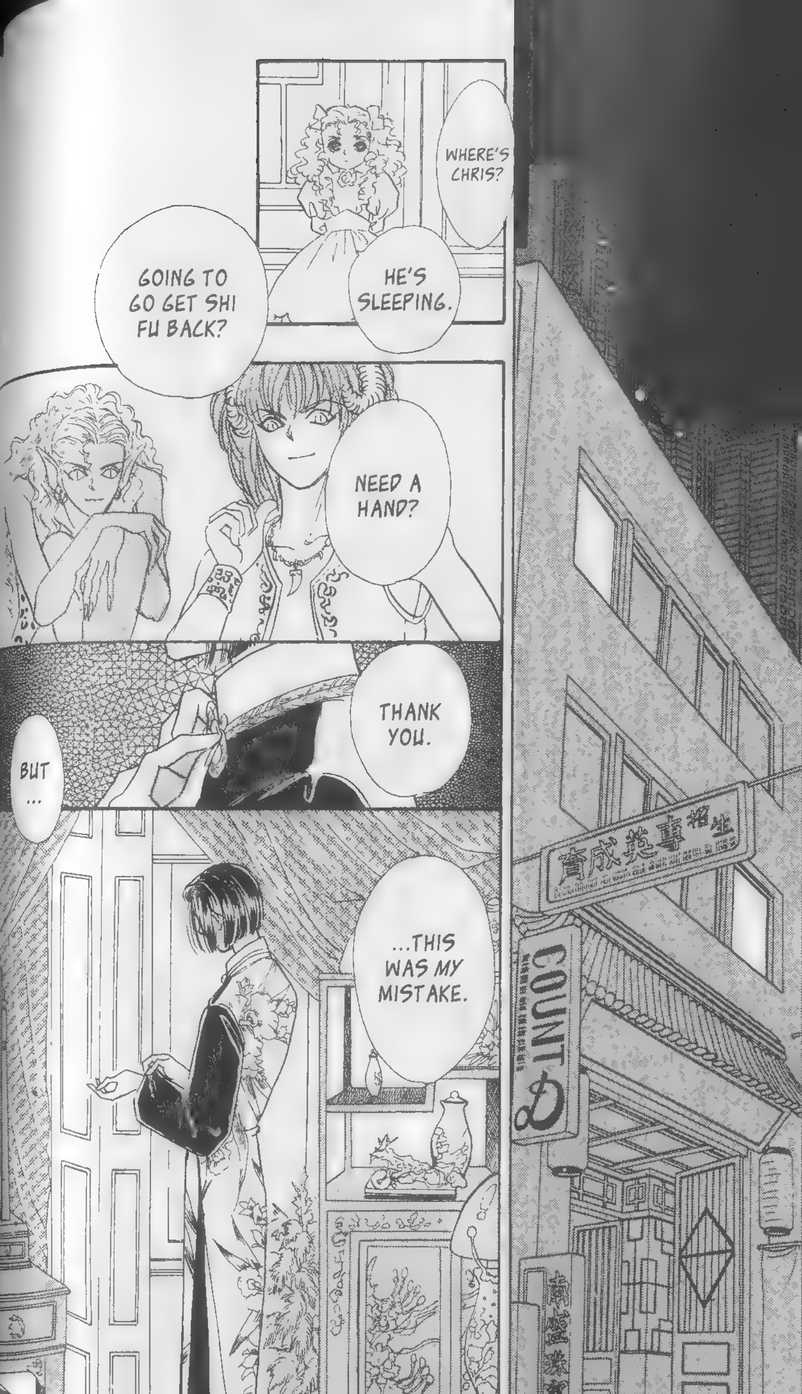

THAT PAINTING MUST BE THE "TIGER" REFERRED TO IN WAN KUO WEN'S WILL!
WELL DONE, XIAO FUA!
GIVE IT TO ME, CHILD.
I-I CAN'T.
WHAT?
XIAO FUA, IF YOU POSSESS THE SCROLL...
...THEN ALL YOUR DESIRES SHALL BE GIVEN TO YOU.
HOWEVER, YOU MUST **NOT** LET ANYONE ELSE SEE OR TOUCH IT.
IF YOU DO, ALL ITS POWER WILL VANISH...
TH-THIS IS A GIFT TO ME FROM THE COUNT.
I CAN'T GIVE IT TO YOU. I-I... I WON'T.

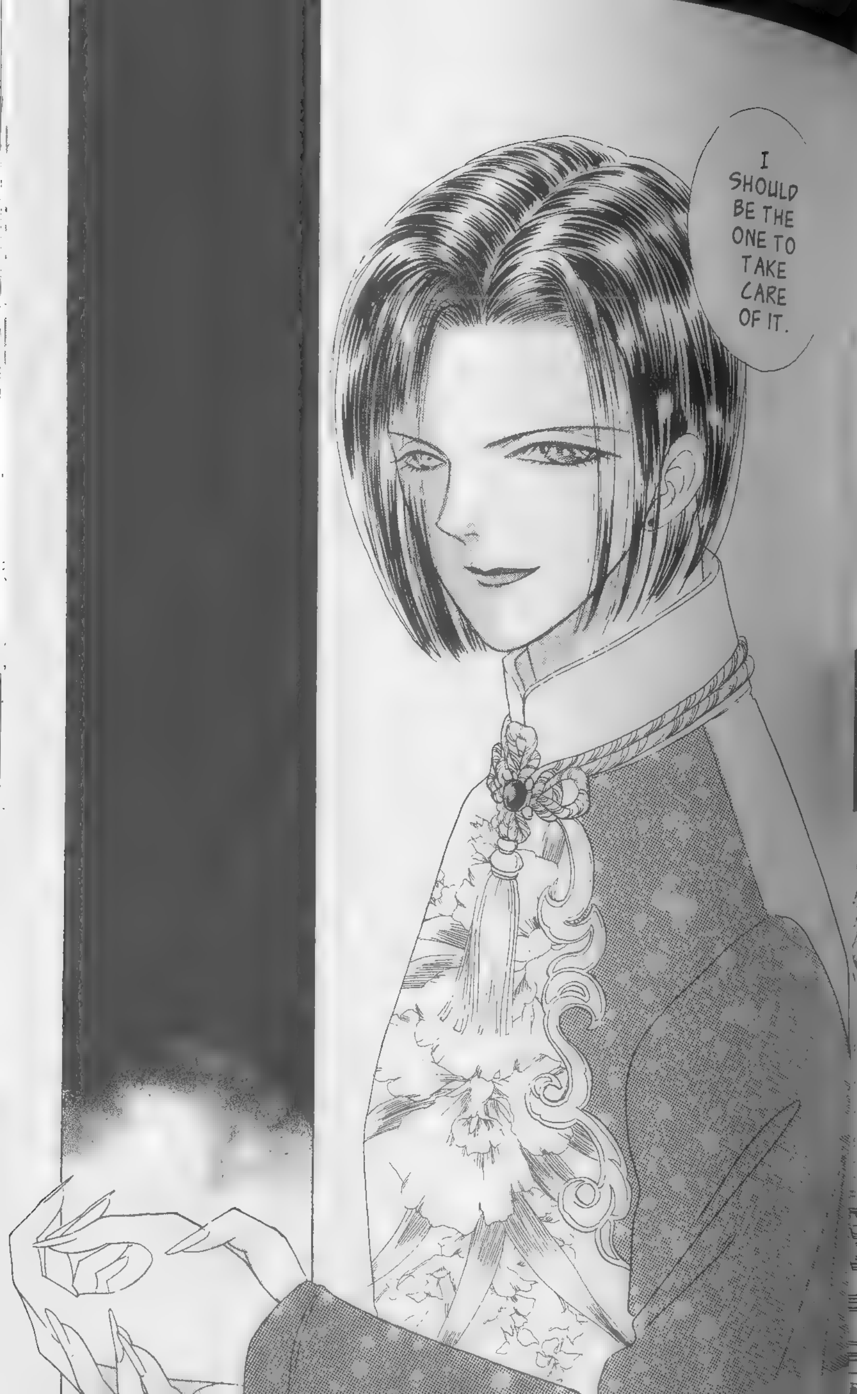

...AND YOU WILL BE LEFT WITH NOTHING.
HGH...
YOU UNGRATEFUL LITTLE BRAT! WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME?!
XIAO FUA...
I'M SORRY. I KEEP TREATING YOU LIKE A CHILD...
?!
...WHEN IF I HAD SIMPLY OPENED MY EYES, I'D HAVE SEEN YOU'VE BECOME A WOMAN.
GIVE ME THE PAINTING AND I PROMISE TO BUILD YOU A HOUSE OF YOUR OWN.
ANYTHING YOU WANT, I'LL PROVIDE FOR YOU. NICE CLOTHES, JEWELRY, A CAR...ANYTHING! IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO...
...FOR MY BRIDE.
I...

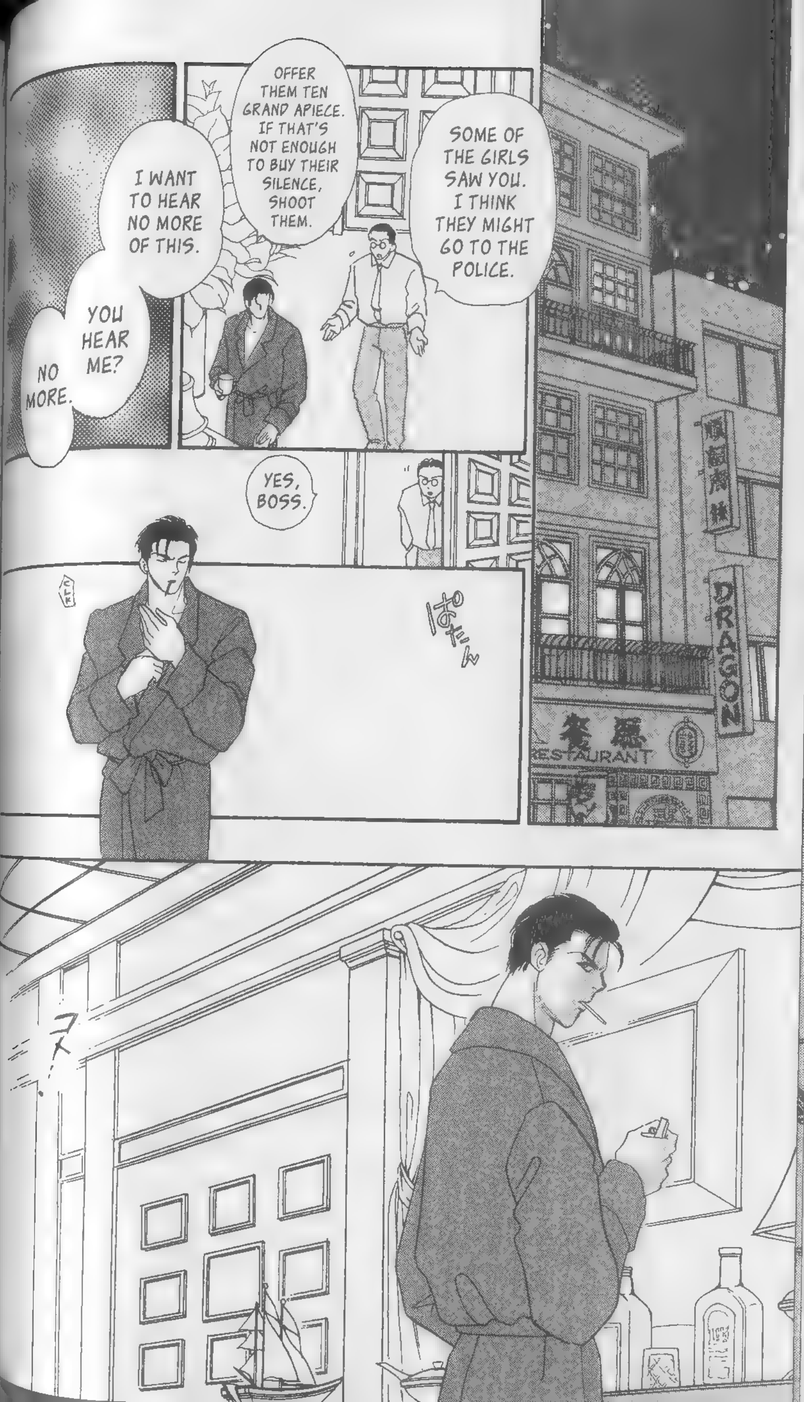

MM...
I DON'T WANT THIS!
!!
HUH!
YOU...
OH, GOD...
PLEASE FORGIVE ME!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOT INTO ME!

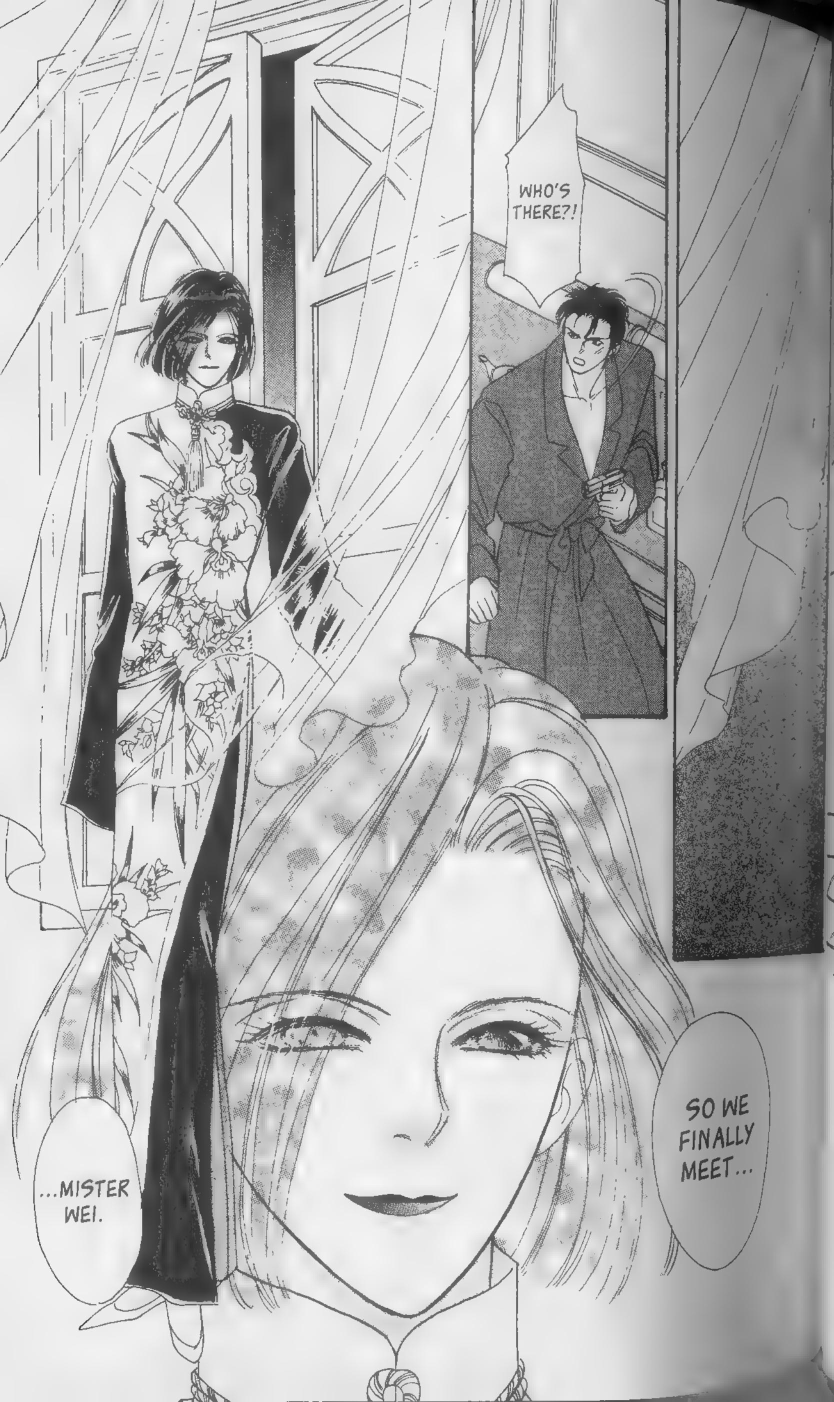

AAAAAAAAAAH!

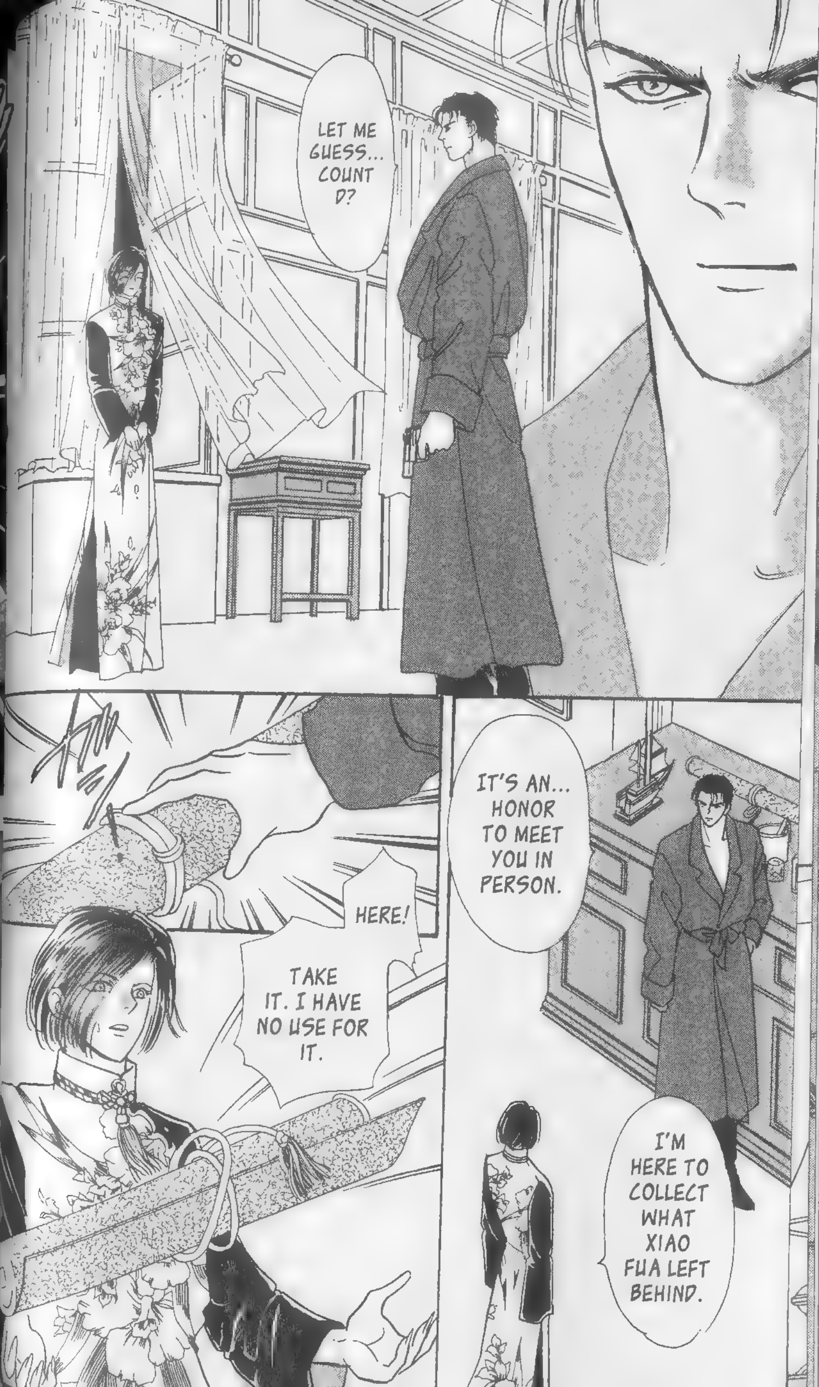

專家
雪白牌
TERRIBLE.
SHE'S JUST A CHILD!
I'LL BET THIS IS SOMEHOW TIED TO THE MAFIA SUCCESSION.
HER FACE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY BEATEN IN.
THE COPS ARE GONNA HAVE A HELLUVA TIME TRYING TO IDENTIFY HER.
SICK.
WHAT SORT OF MONSTER WOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO A LITTLE GIRL?!

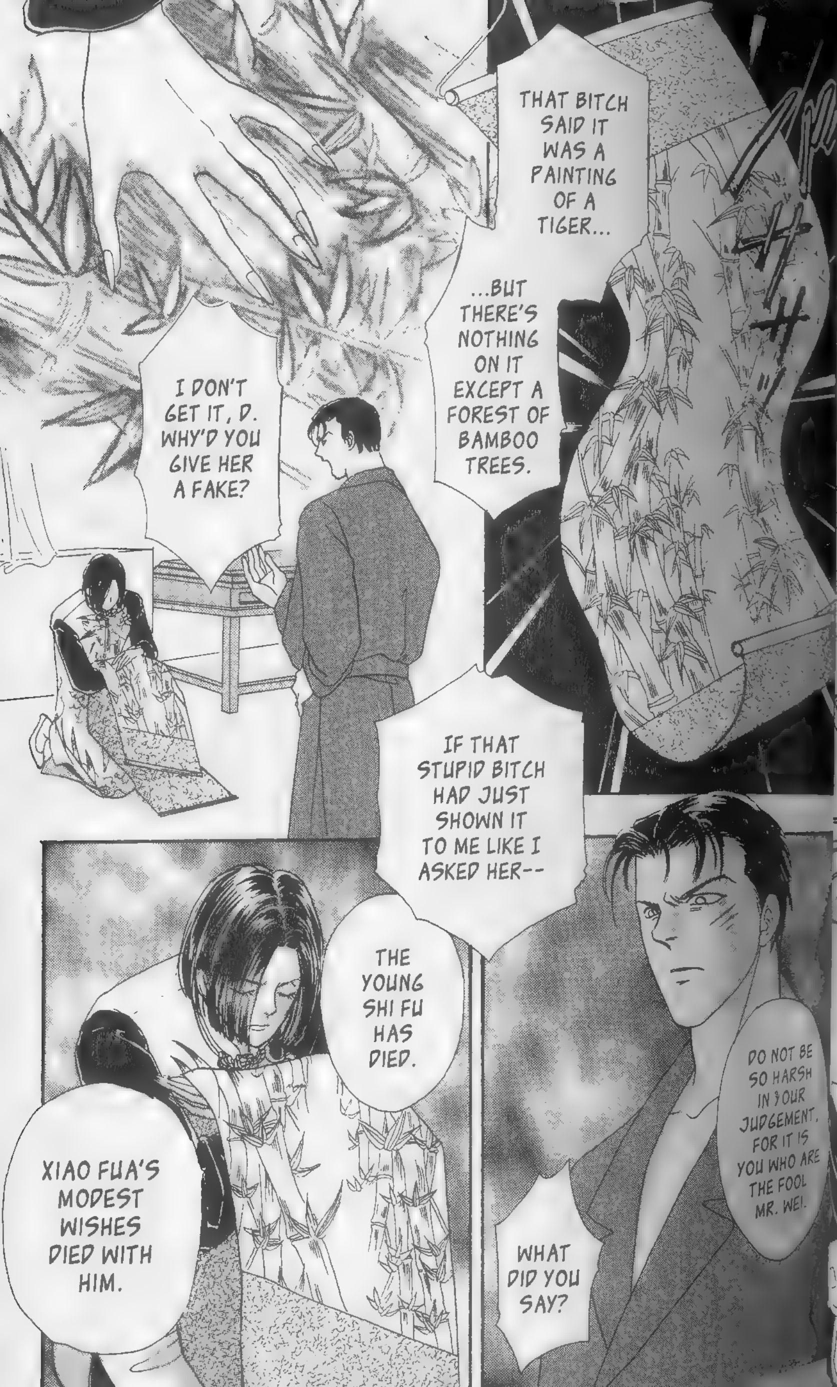

WHERE'S CHRIS?
HE'S SLEEPING.
GOING TO GO GET SHI FU BACK?
NEED A HAND?
THANK YOU.
BUT ...
...THIS WAS MY MISTAKE.
COUNT D

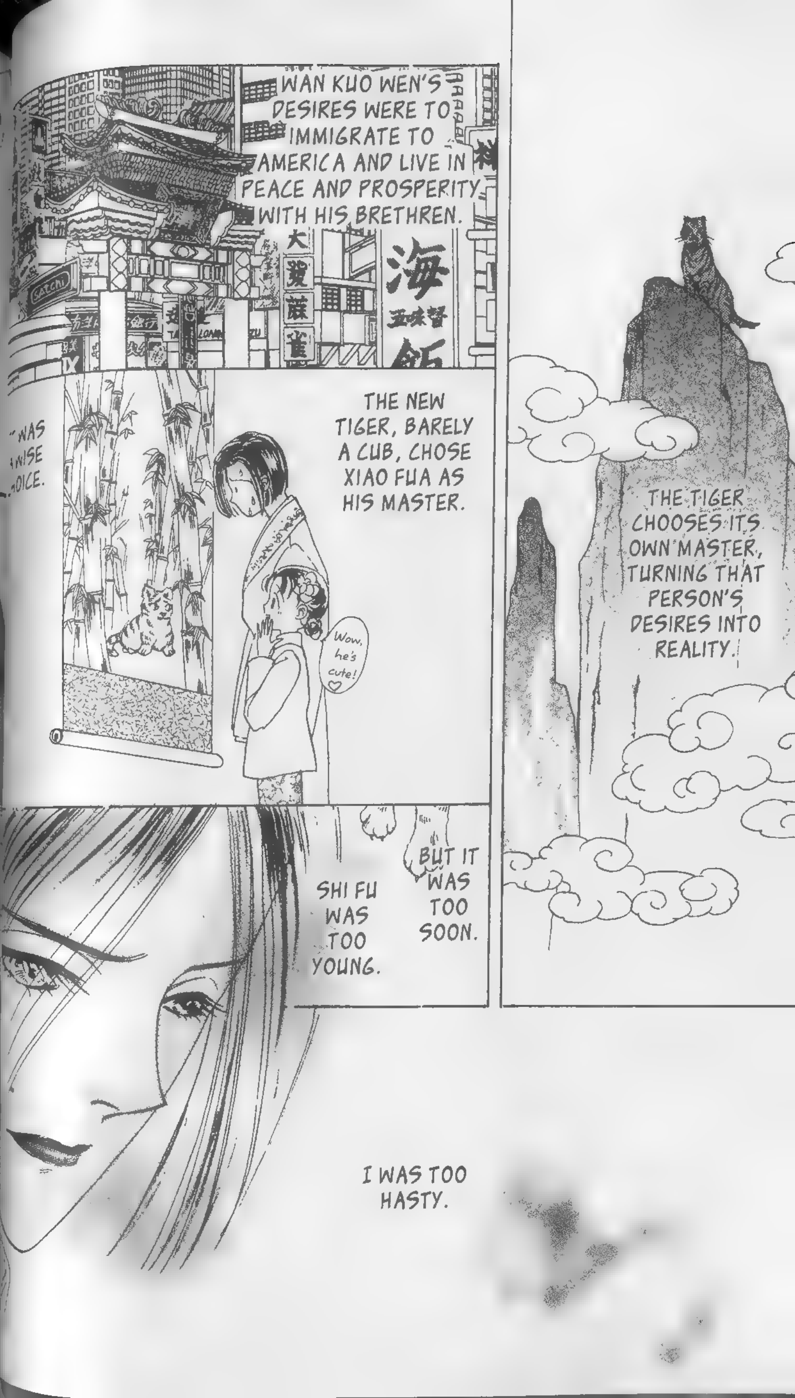

I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO TAKE CARE OF IT.

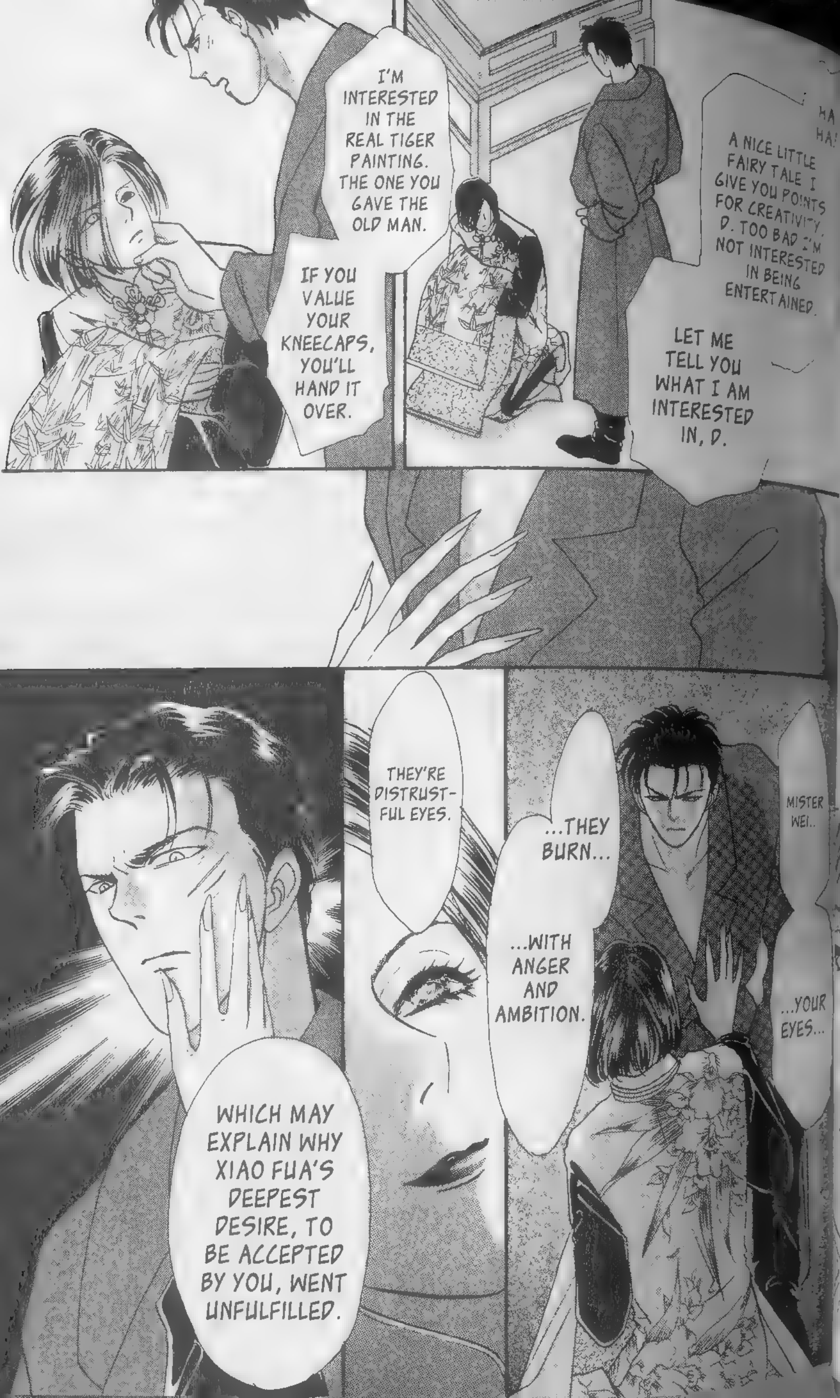

SOME OF THE GIRLS SAW YOU. I THINK THEY MIGHT GO TO THE POLICE.
OFFER THEM TEN GRAND APIECE. IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO BUY THEIR SILENCE, SHOOT THEM.
I WANT TO HEAR NO MORE OF THIS.
YOU HEAR ME?
NO MORE.
DRAGON
餐廳
RESTAURANT
YES, BOSS.
ぱたん
CLK
コン

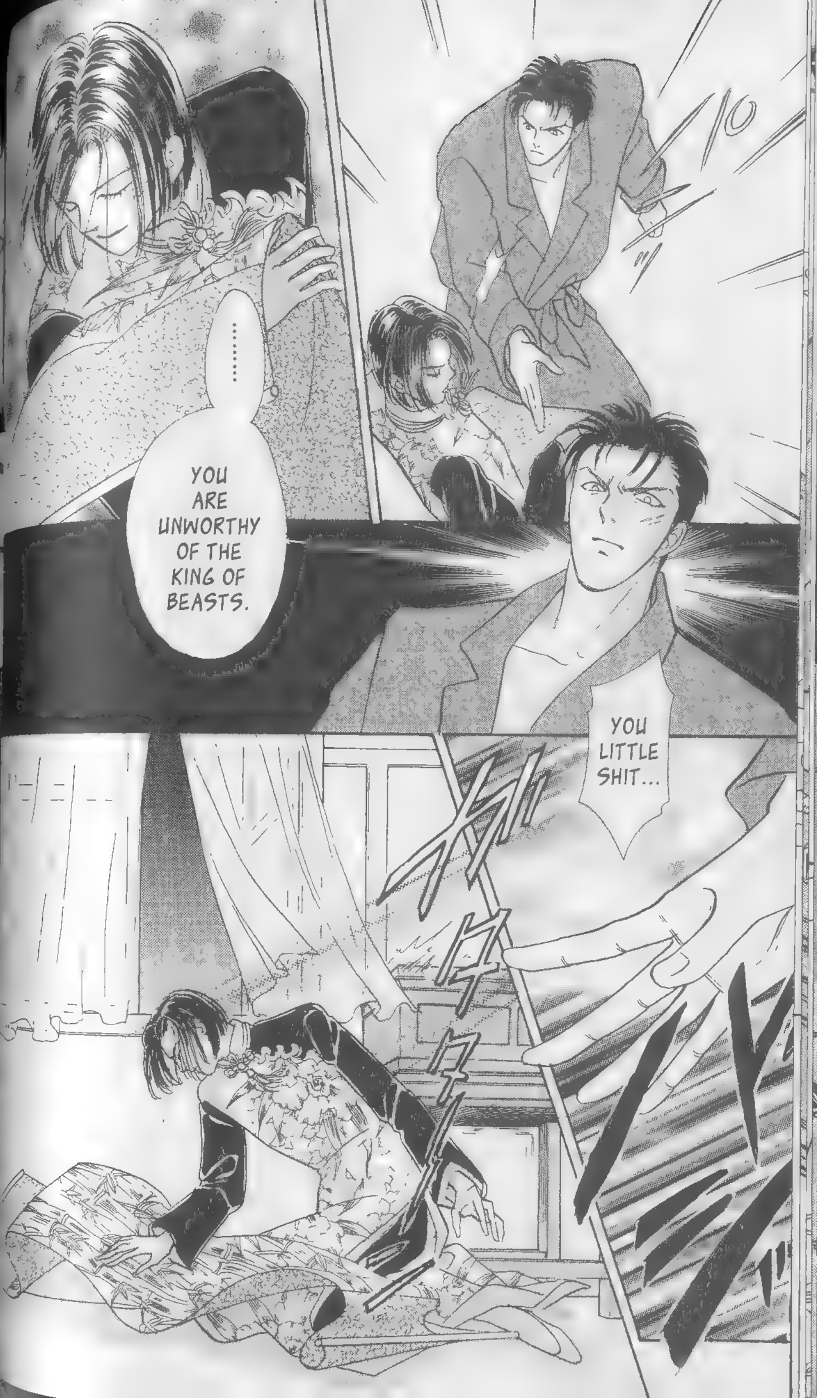

WHO'S THERE?!
SO WE FINALLY MEET...
...MISTER WEI.

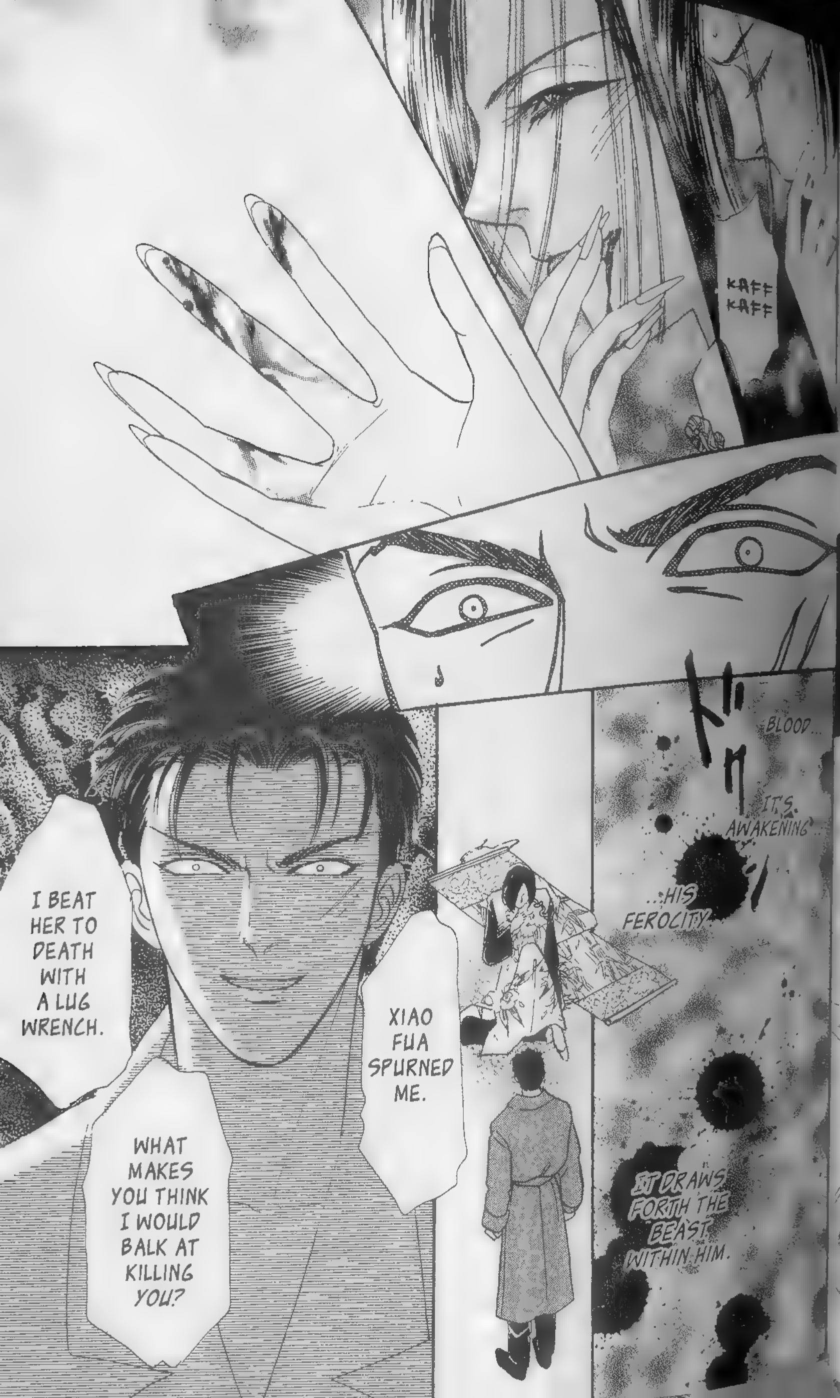

LET ME GUESS... COUNT D?
IT'S AN... HONOR TO MEET YOU IN PERSON.
I'M HERE TO COLLECT WHAT XIAO FUA LEFT BEHIND.
HERE!
TAKE IT. I HAVE NO USE FOR IT.

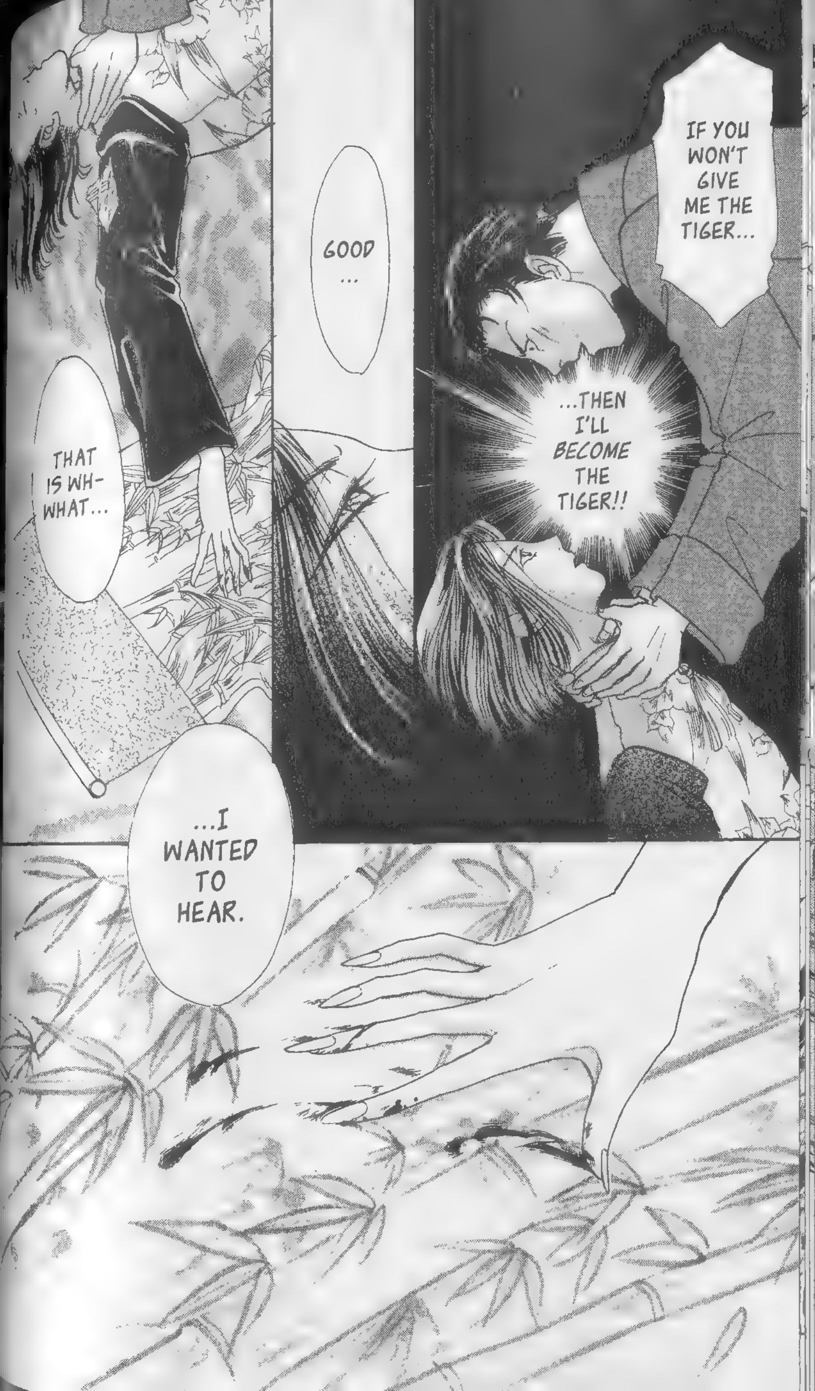

THAT BITCH SAID IT WAS A PAINTING OF A TIGER...
...BUT THERE'S NOTHING ON IT EXCEPT A FOREST OF BAMBOO TREES.
I DON'T GET IT, D. WHY'D YOU GIVE HER A FAKE?
IF THAT STUPID BITCH HAD JUST SHOWN IT TO ME LIKE I ASKED HER--
DO NOT BE SO HARSH IN YOUR JUDGEMENT, FOR IT IS YOU WHO ARE THE FOOL MR. WEI.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
THE YOUNG SHI FU HAS DIED.
XIAO FUA'S MODEST WISHES DIED WITH HIM.

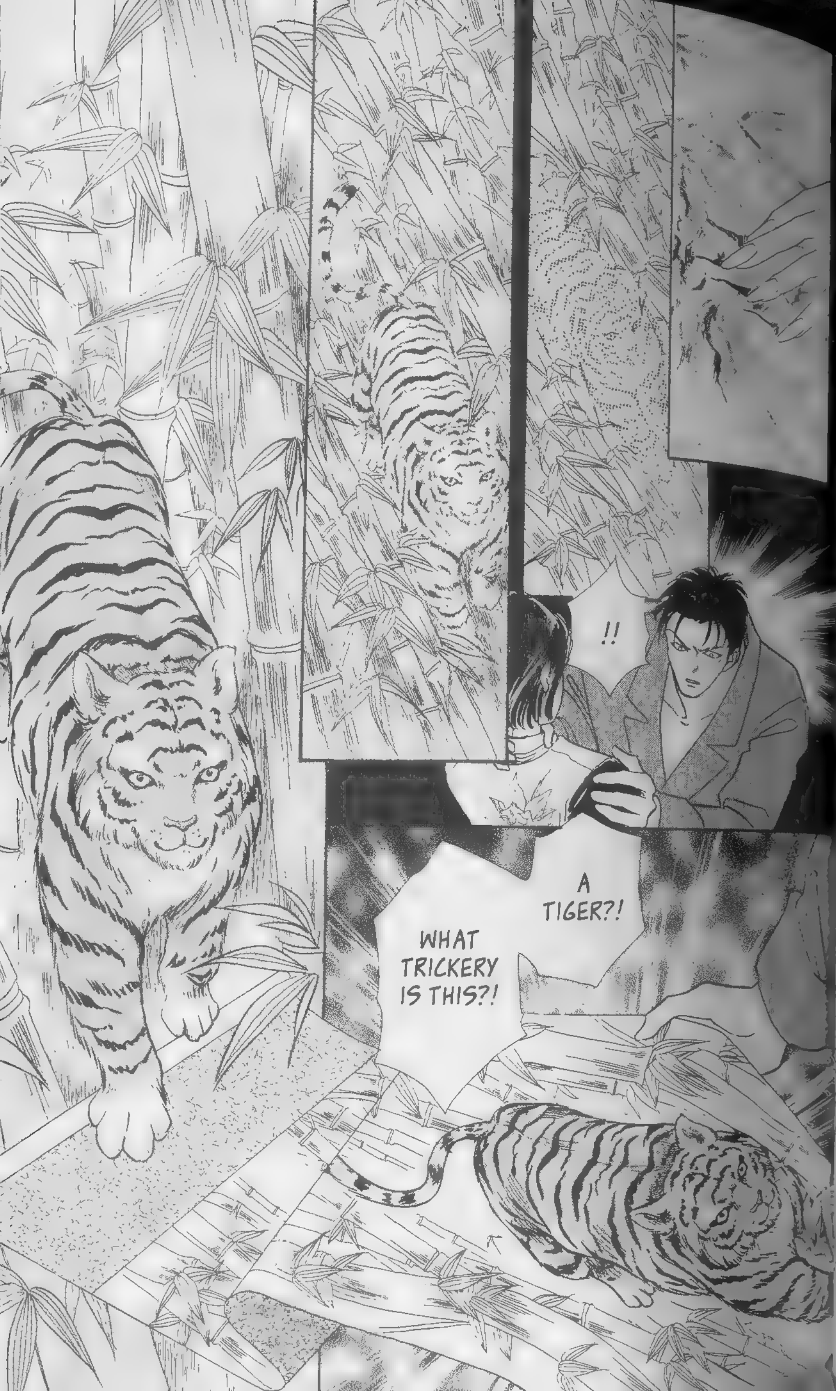

THE TIGER CHOOSES ITS OWN MASTER, TURNING THAT PERSON'S DESIRES INTO REALITY.
WAN KUO WEN'S DESIRES WERE TO IMMIGRATE TO AMERICA AND LIVE IN PEACE AND PROSPERITY WITH HIS BRETHREN.
THE NEW TIGER, BARELY A CUB, CHOSE XIAO FUA AS HIS MASTER.
Wow, he's cute! ♡
T WAS WISE HOICE.
BUT IT WAS TOO SOON.
SHI FU WAS TOO YOUNG.
I WAS TOO HASTY.

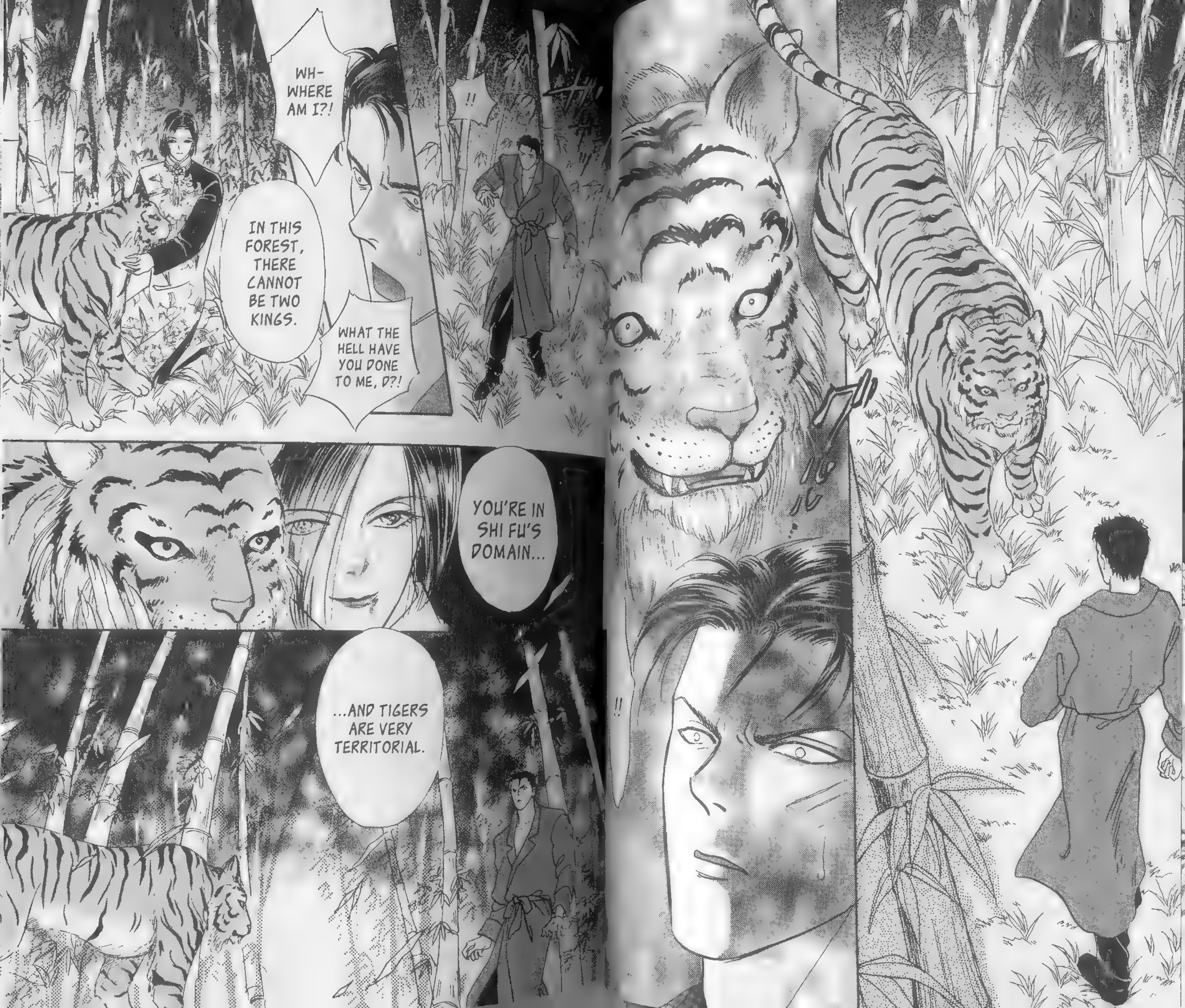

HA HA!
A NICE LITTLE FAIRY TALE. I GIVE YOU POINTS FOR CREATIVITY, D. TOO BAD I'M NOT INTERESTED IN BEING ENTERTAINED.
LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I AM INTERESTED IN, D.
I'M INTERESTED IN THE REAL TIGER PAINTING. THE ONE YOU GAVE THE OLD MAN.
IF YOU VALUE YOUR KNEECAPS, YOU'LL HAND IT OVER.
MISTER WEI...
...YOUR EYES...
...THEY BURN...
...WITH ANGER AND AMBITION.
THEY'RE DISTRUSTFUL EYES.
WHICH MAY EXPLAIN WHY XIAO FUA'S DEEPEST DESIRE, TO BE ACCEPTED BY YOU, WENT UNFULFILLED.

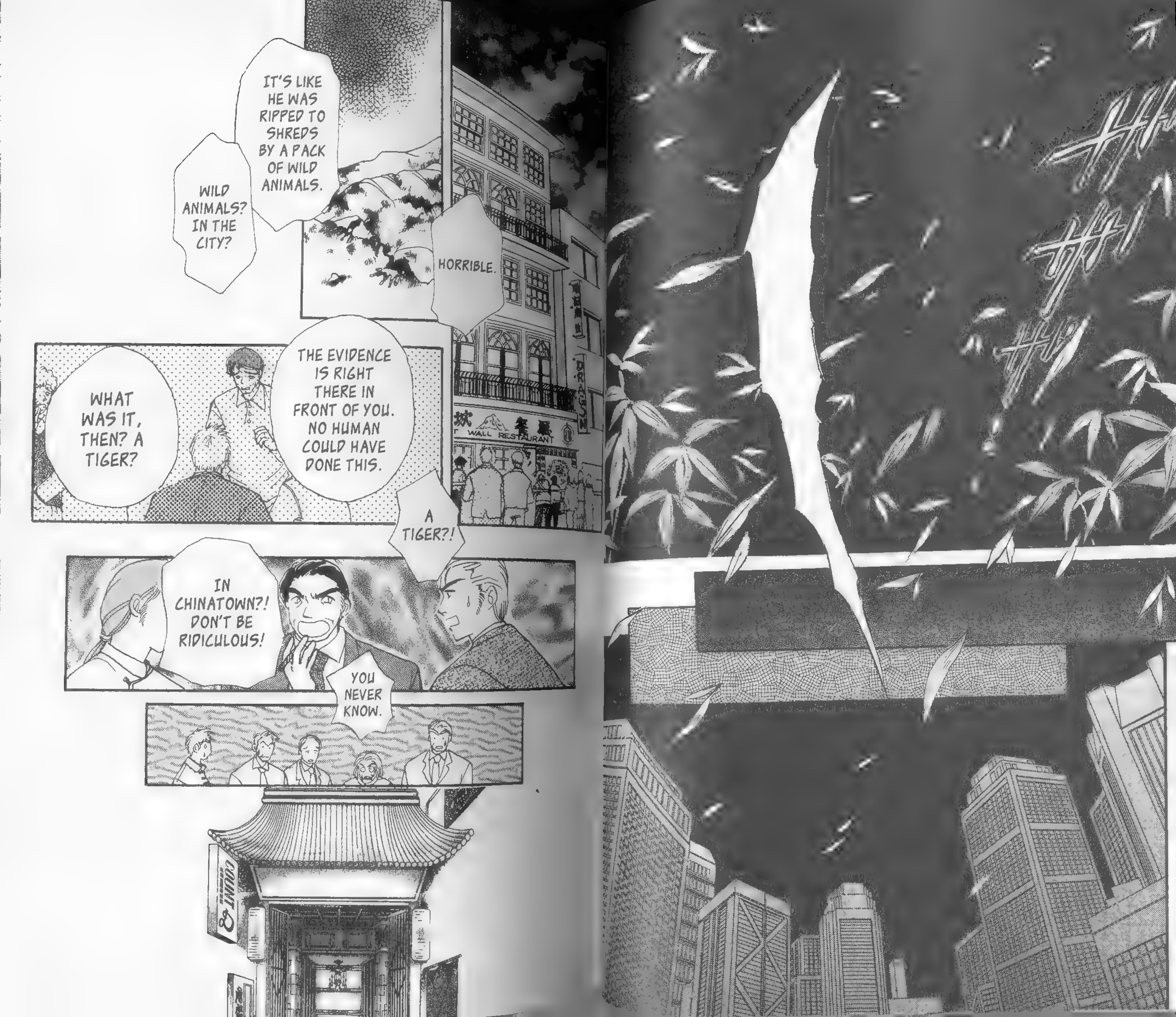

......
YOU ARE UNWORTHY OF THE KING OF BEASTS.
YOU LITTLE SHIT...


KAFF KAFF
BLOOD...
IT'S AWAKENING...
...HIS FEROCITY.
IT DRAWS FORTH THE BEAST WITHIN HIM.
XIAO FUA SPURNED ME.
I BEAT HER TO DEATH WITH A LUG WRENCH.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WOULD BALK AT KILLING YOU?

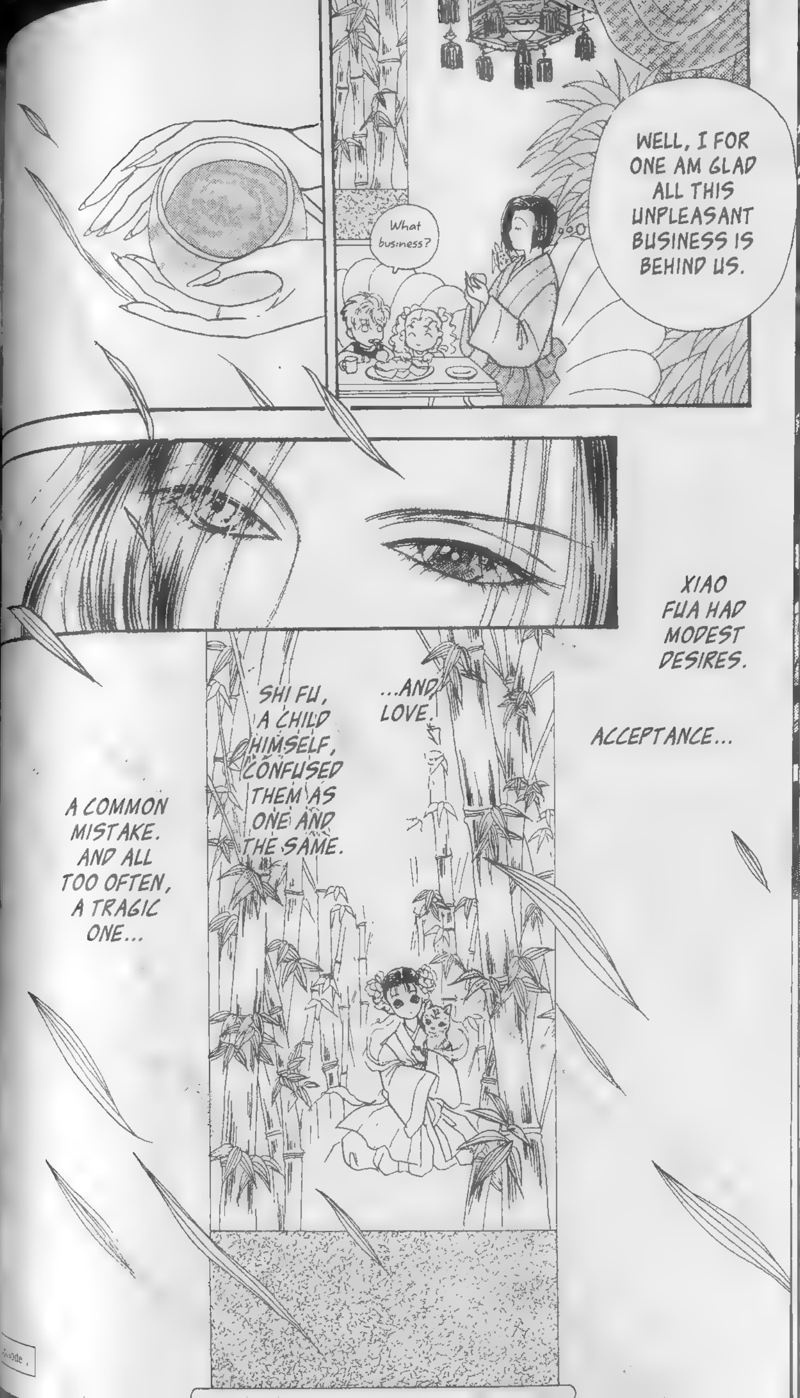

IF YOU WON'T GIVE ME THE TIGER...
...THEN I'LL BECOME THE TIGER!!
GOOD...
THAT IS WH-WHAT...
...I WANTED TO HEAR.

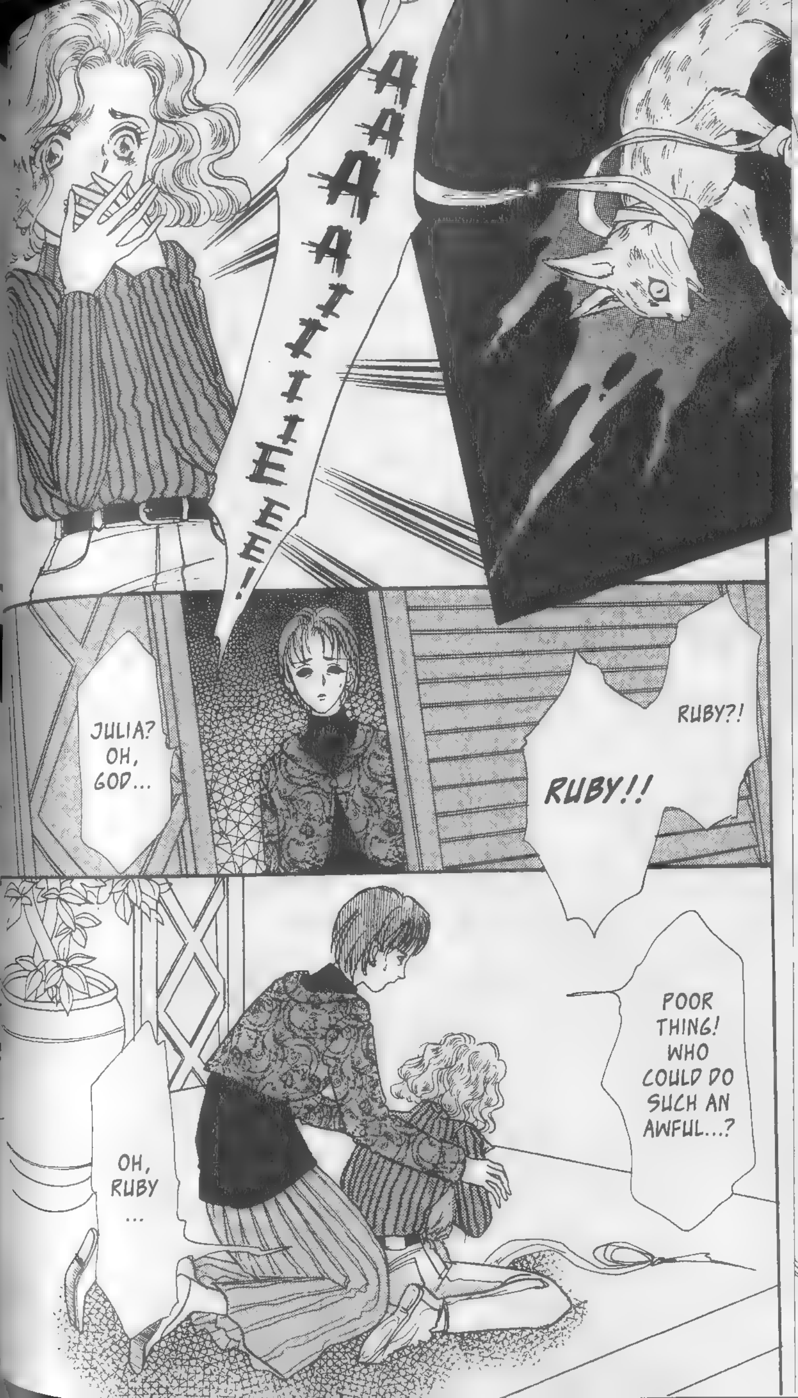

!!
A TIGER?!
WHAT TRICKERY IS THIS?!

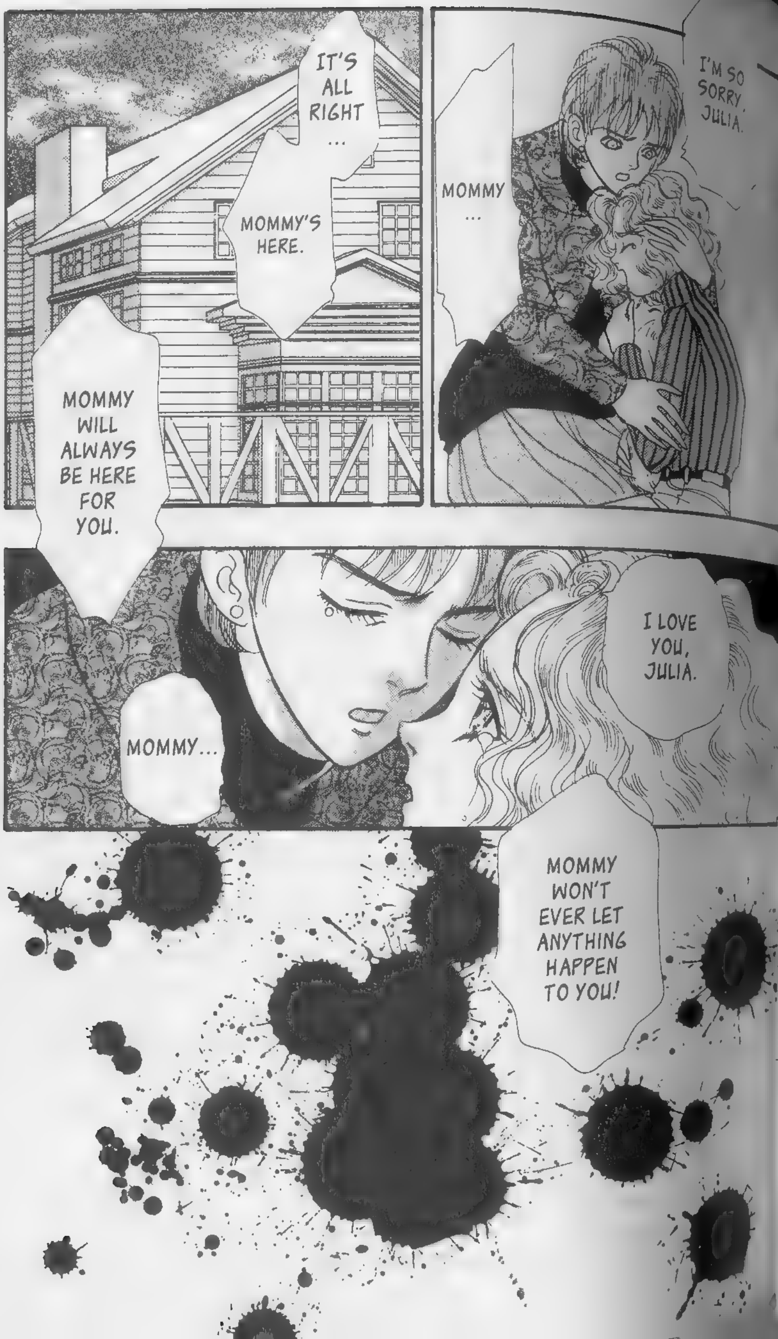

!!
WH- WHERE AM I?!
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE TO ME, D?!
IN THIS FOREST, THERE CANNOT BE TWO KINGS.
YOU'RE IN SHI FU'S DOMAIN...
...AND TIGERS ARE VERY TERRITORIAL.
!!

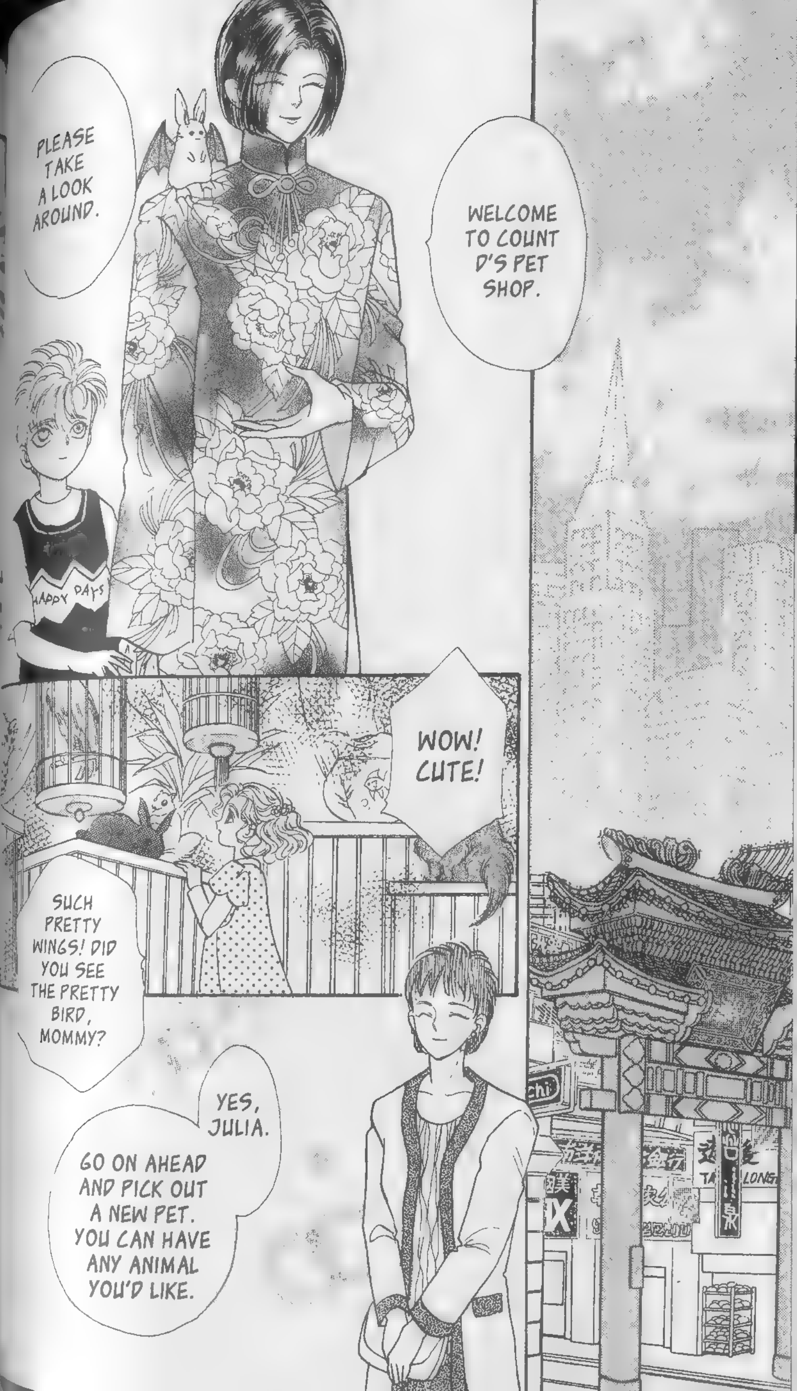

IT'S LIKE HE WAS RIPPED TO SHREDS BY A PACK OF WILD ANIMALS.
WILD ANIMALS? IN THE CITY?
HORRIBLE.
DRAGON
WALL RESTAURANT
THE EVIDENCE IS RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF YOU. NO HUMAN COULD HAVE DONE THIS.
WHAT WAS IT, THEN? A TIGER?
A TIGER?!
IN CHINATOWN?! DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!
YOU NEVER KNOW.
COUNT D

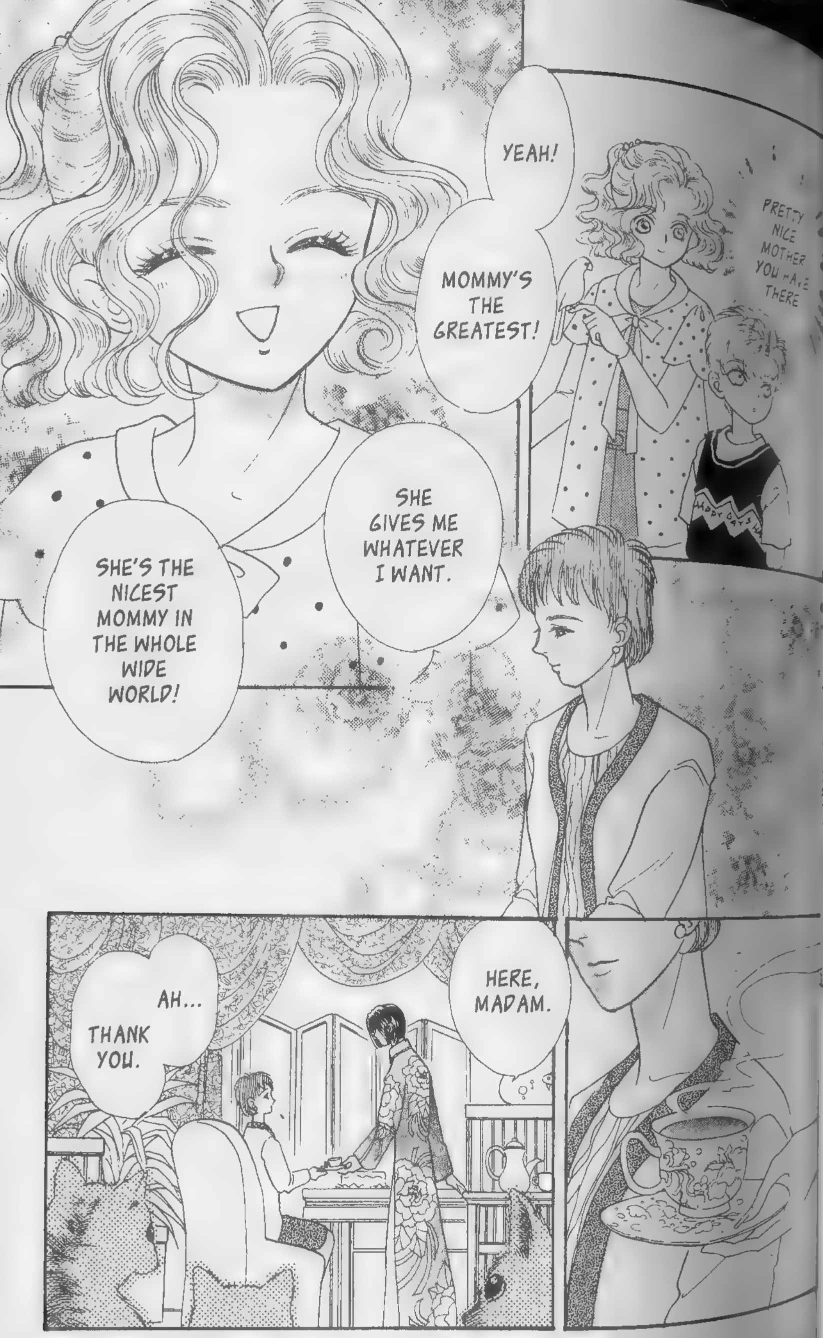
第2話 Durableness

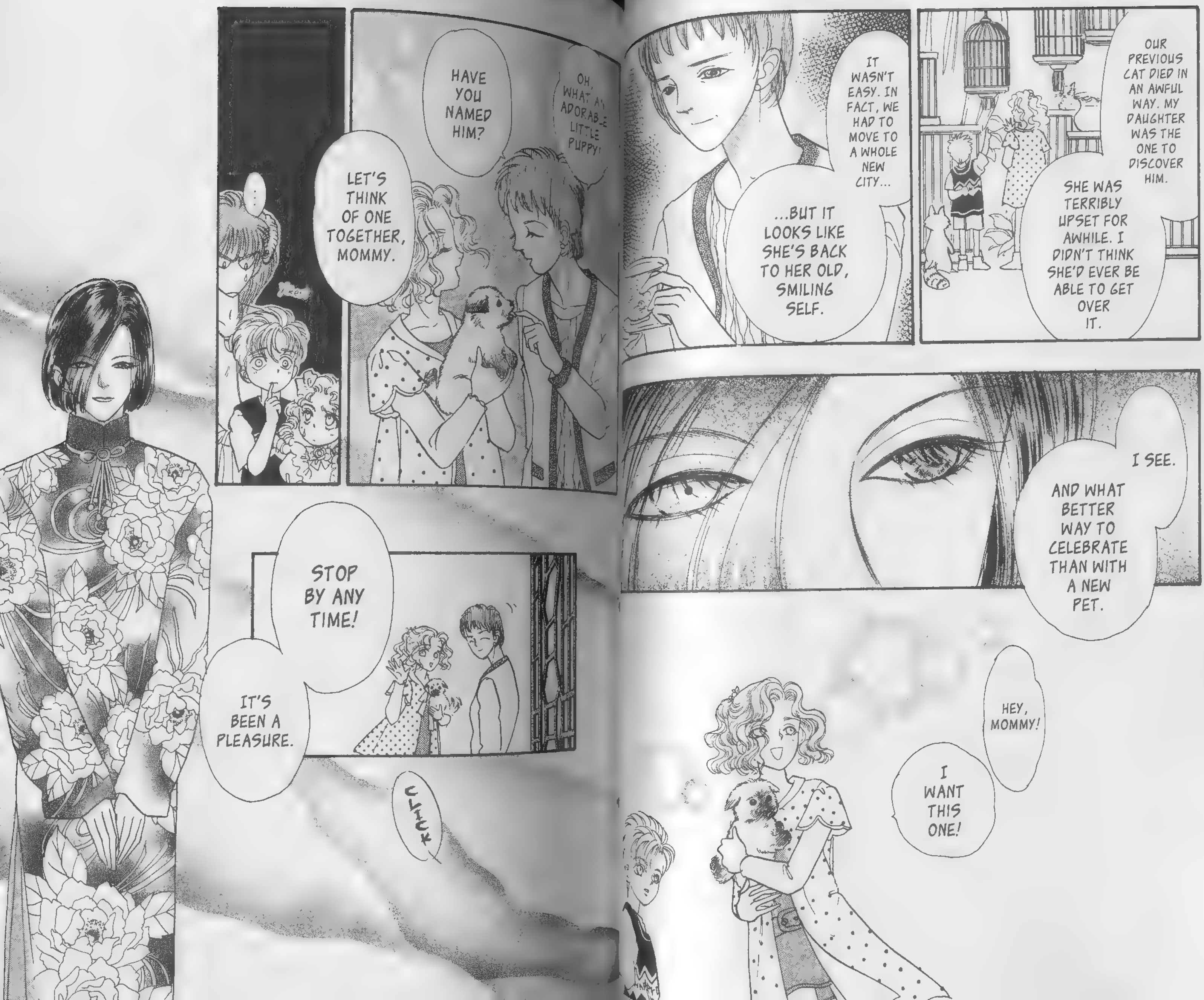

WELL, I FOR ONE AM GLAD ALL THIS UNPLEASANT BUSINESS IS BEHIND US.
What business?
XIAO FUA HAD MODEST DESIRES.
ACCEPTANCE...
...AND LOVE.
SHI FU, A CHILD HIMSELF, CONFUSED THEM AS ONE AND THE SAME.
A COMMON MISTAKE. AND ALL TOO OFTEN, A TRAGIC ONE...

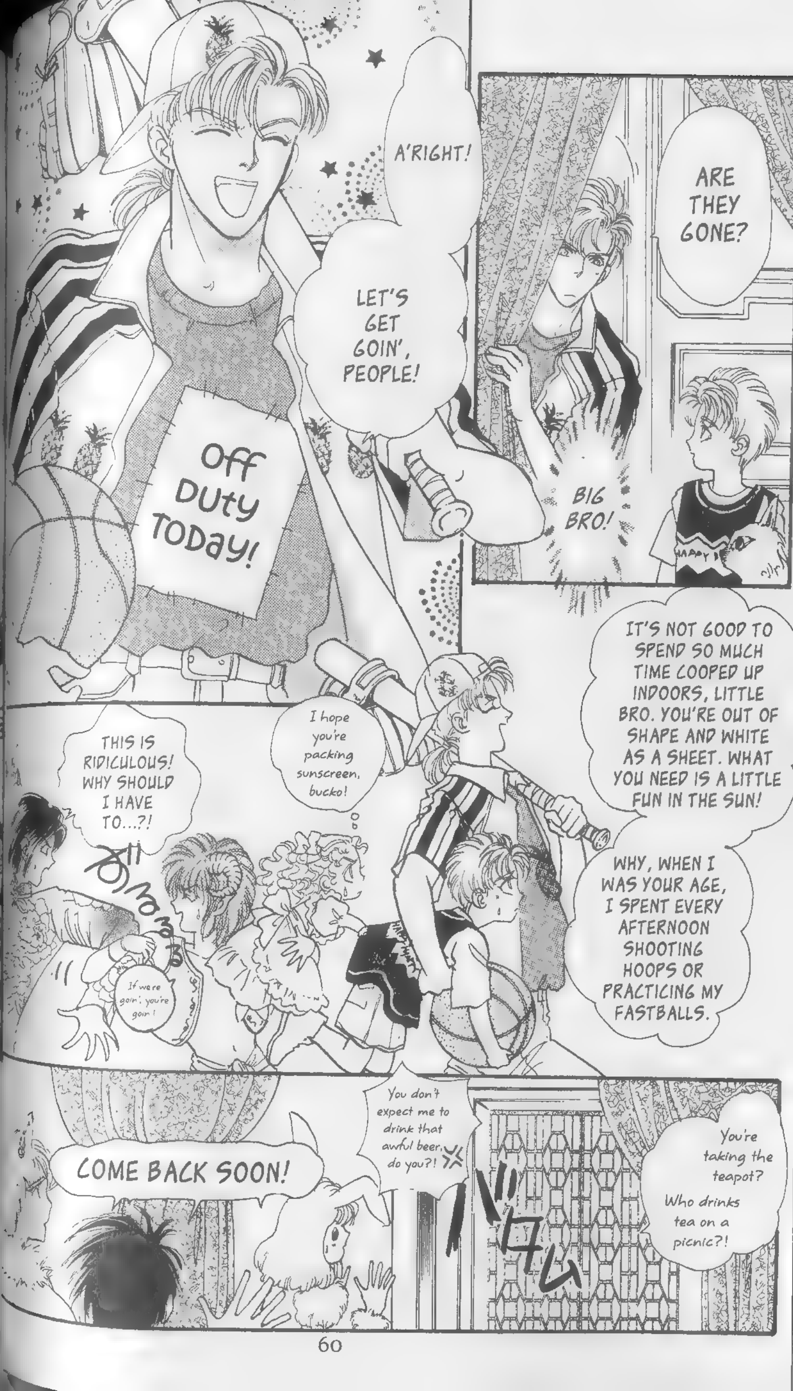

AAAAIIIIIEEEE!
RUBY?!
RUBY!!
JULIA? OH, GOD...
POOR THING! WHO COULD DO SUCH AN AWFUL...?
OH, RUBY ...

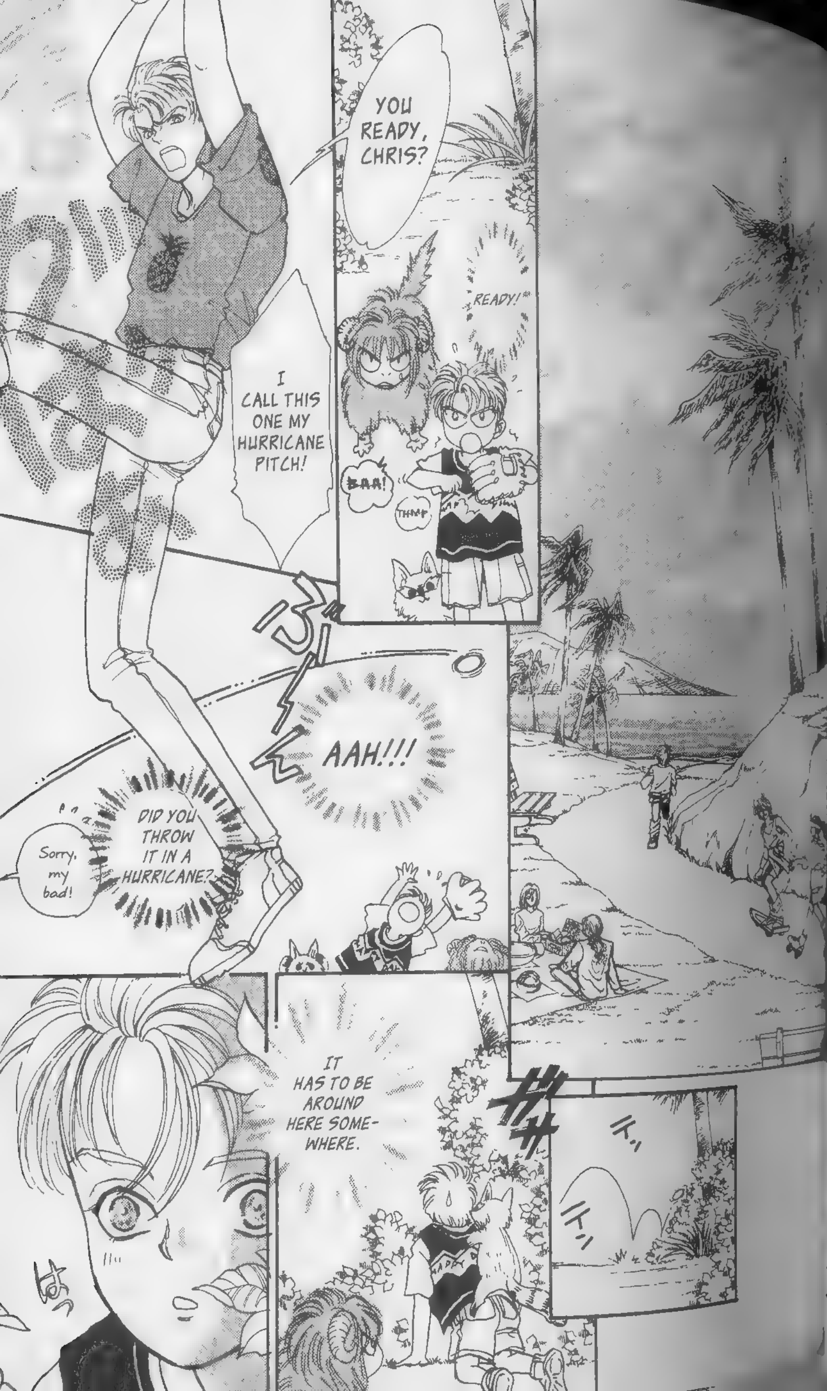

I'M SO SORRY, JULIA.
MOMMY ...
IT'S ALL RIGHT ...
MOMMY'S HERE.
MOMMY WILL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU.
I LOVE YOU, JULIA.
MOMMY...
MOMMY WON'T EVER LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU!

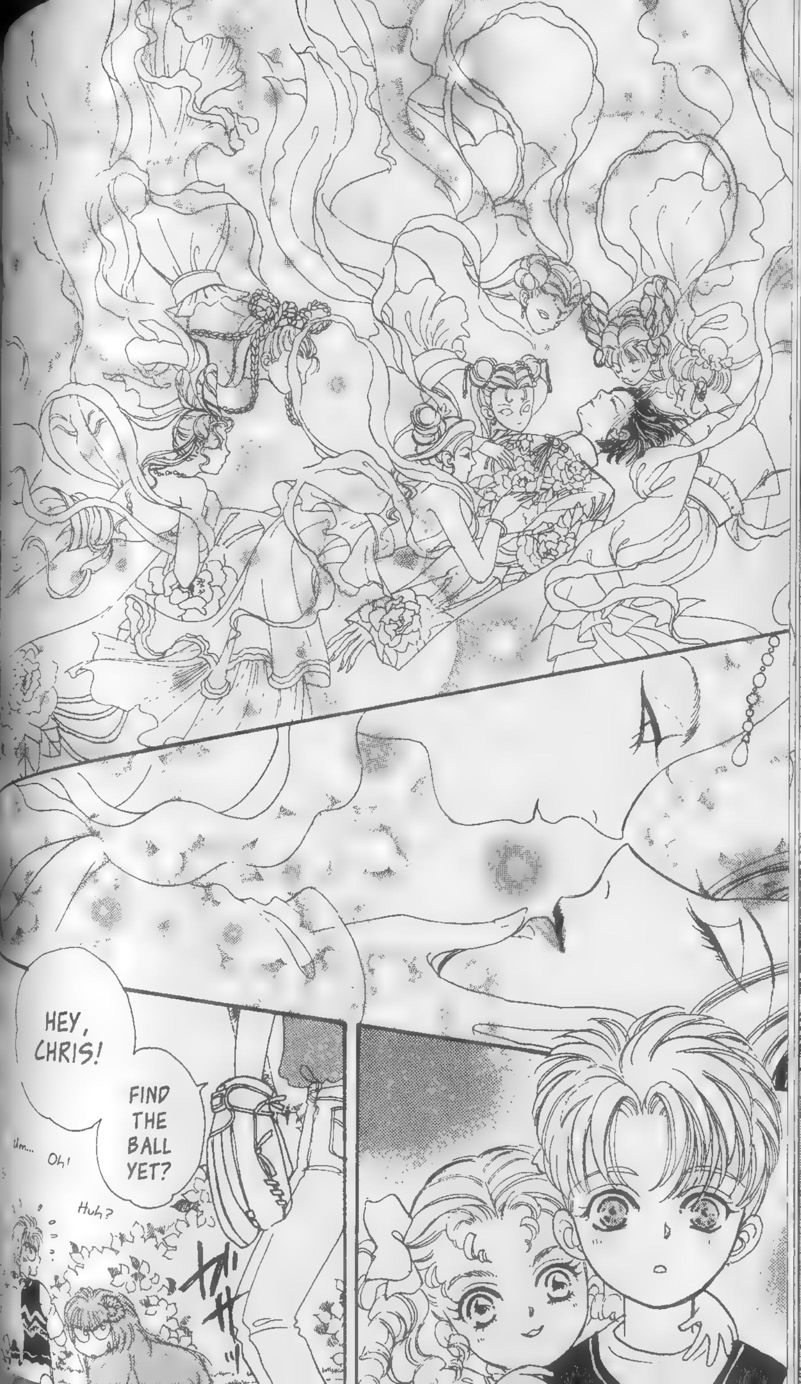

WELCOME TO COUNT D'S PET SHOP.
PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
HAPPY DAYS
WOW! CUTE!
SUCH PRETTY WINGS! DID YOU SEE THE PRETTY BIRD, MOMMY?
YES, JULIA.
GO ON AHEAD AND PICK OUT A NEW PET. YOU CAN HAVE ANY ANIMAL YOU'D LIKE.
TA LONG

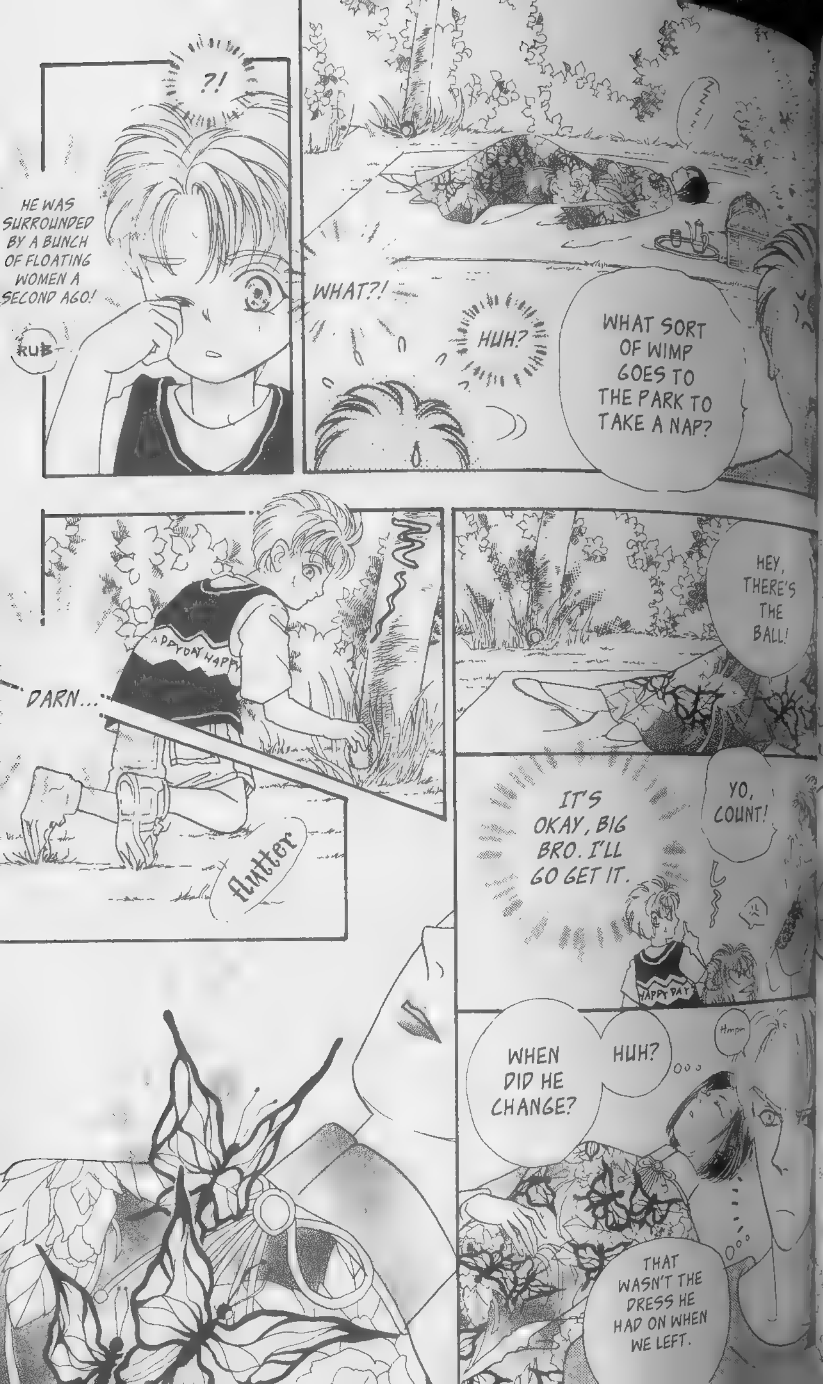

YEAH!
MOMMY'S THE GREATEST!
PRETTY NICE MOTHER YOU HAVE THERE
HAPPY DAYS
SHE GIVES ME WHATEVER I WANT.
SHE'S THE NICEST MOMMY IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD!
HERE, MADAM.
AH... THANK YOU.

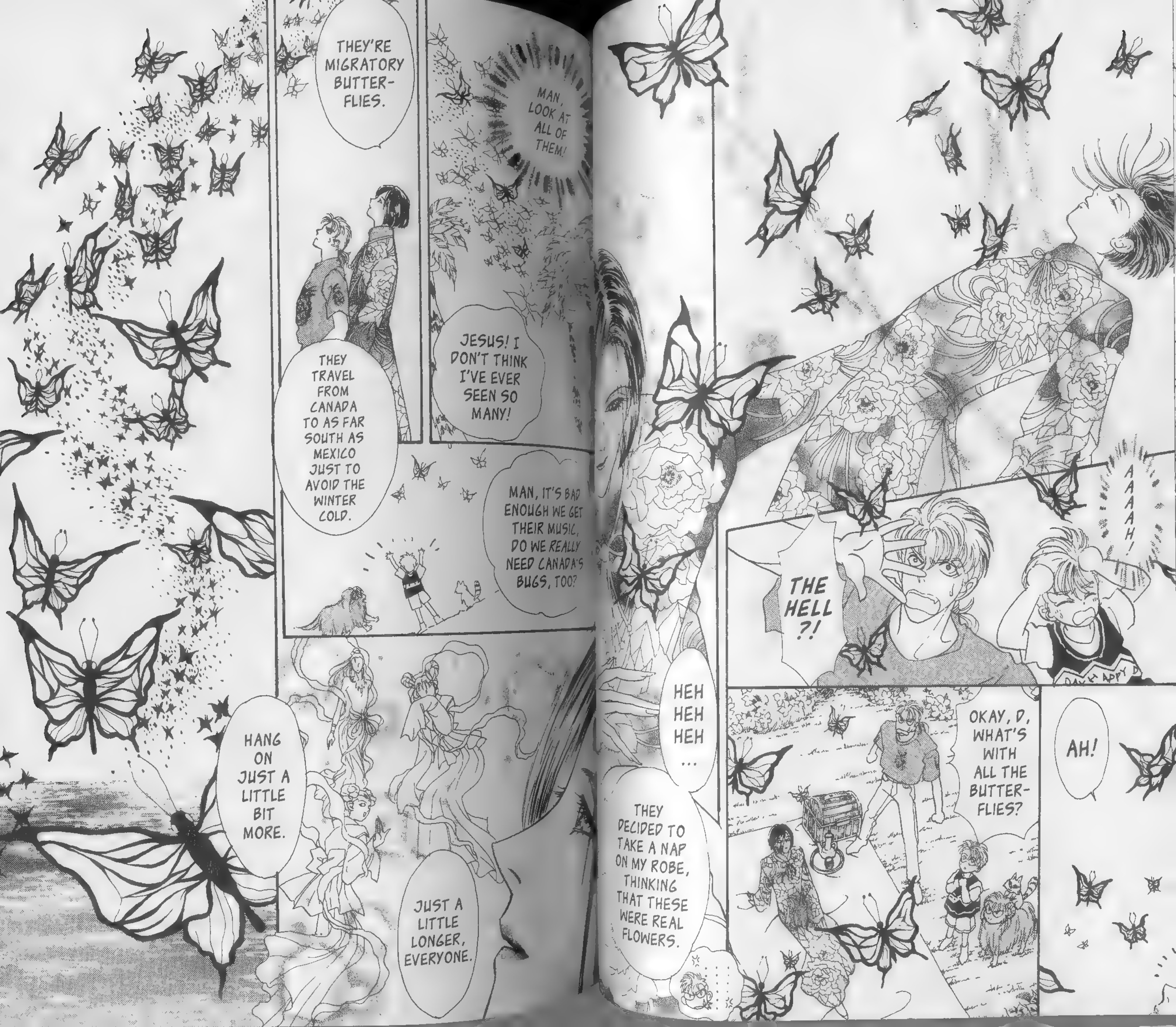

OUR PREVIOUS CAT DIED IN AN AWFUL WAY. MY DAUGHTER WAS THE ONE TO DISCOVER HIM.
SHE WAS TERRIBLY UPSET FOR AWHILE. I DIDN'T THINK SHE'D EVER BE ABLE TO GET OVER IT.
IT WASN'T EASY. IN FACT, WE HAD TO MOVE TO A WHOLE NEW CITY...
...BUT IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S BACK TO HER OLD, SMILING SELF.
I SEE.
AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE THAN WITH A NEW PET.
HEY, MOMMY!
I WANT THIS ONE!
OH, WHAT AN ADORABLE LITTLE PUPPY!
HAVE YOU NAMED HIM?
LET'S THINK OF ONE TOGETHER, MOMMY.
...
STOP BY ANY TIME!
IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE.
CLICK

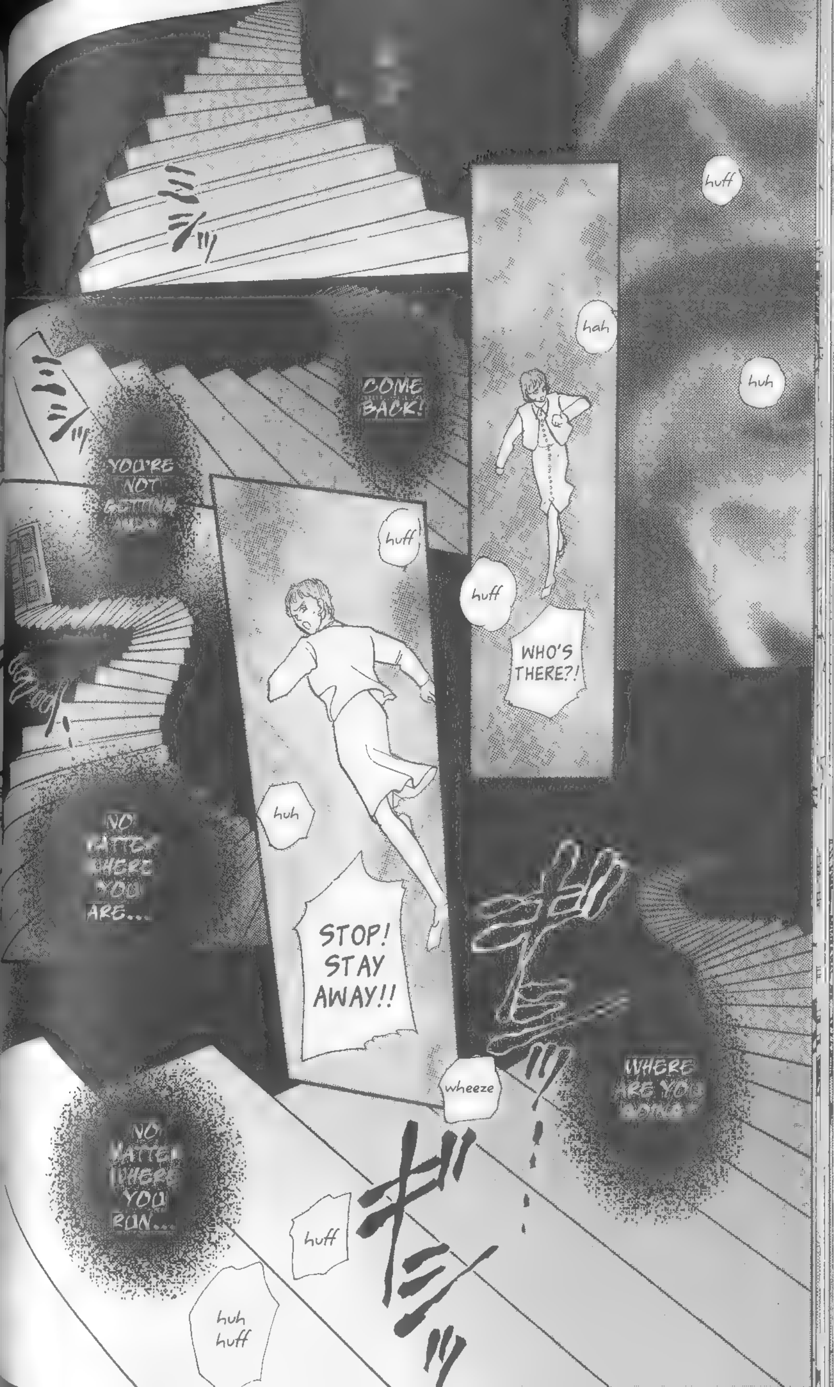

ARE THEY GONE?
BIG BRO!
A'RIGHT!
LET'S GET GOIN', PEOPLE!
Off Duty Today!
IT'S NOT GOOD TO SPEND SO MUCH TIME COOPED UP INDOORS, LITTLE BRO. YOU'RE OUT OF SHAPE AND WHITE AS A SHEET. WHAT YOU NEED IS A LITTLE FUN IN THE SUN!
WHY, WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I SPENT EVERY AFTERNOON SHOOTING HOOPS OR PRACTICING MY FASTBALLS.
I hope you're packing sunscreen, bucko!
THIS IS RIDICULOUS! WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO...?!
If we're goin', you're goin'!
You're taking the teapot? Who drinks tea on a picnic?!
You don't expect me to drink that awful beer, do you?!
COME BACK SOON!

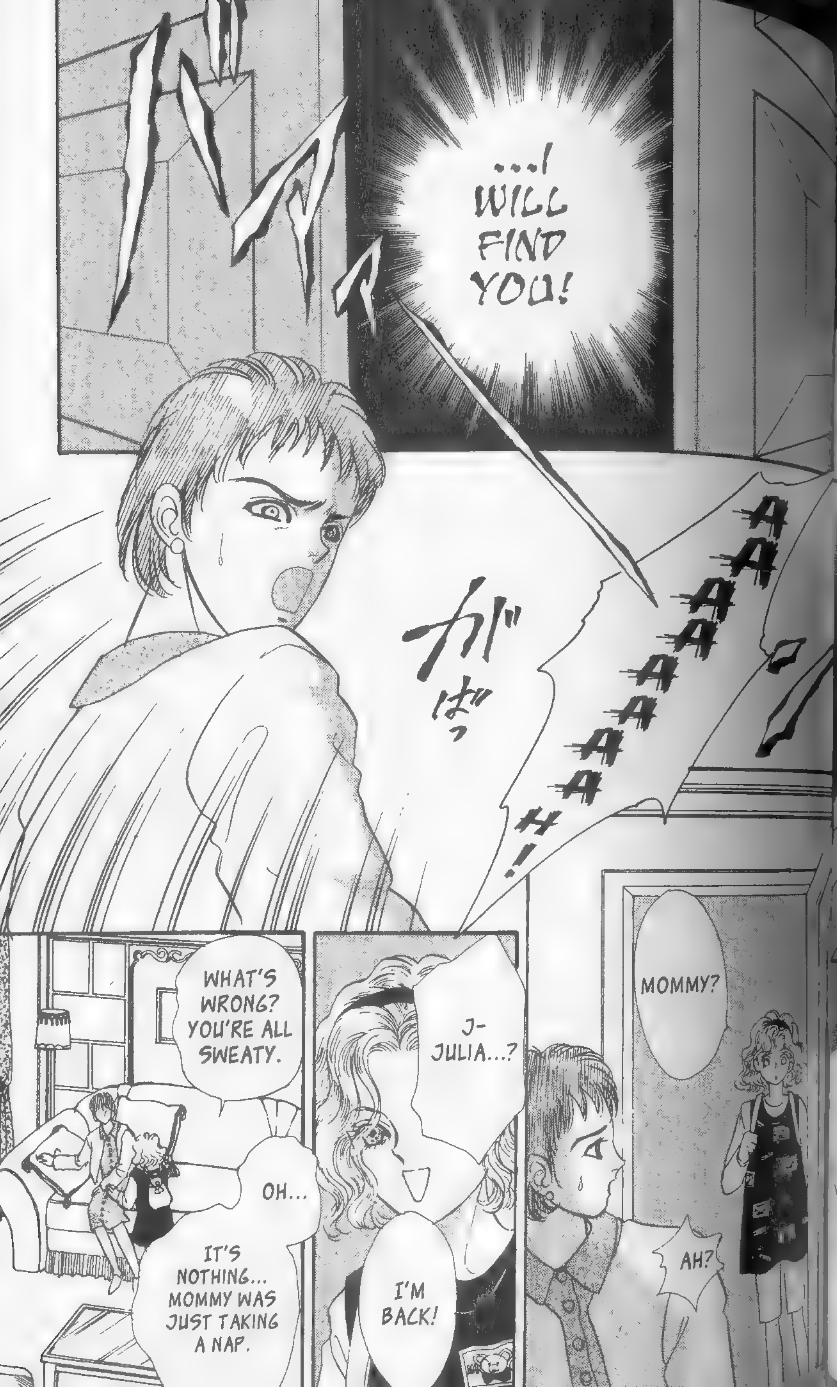

YOU READY, CHRIS?
READY!
BAA!
THMP
I CALL THIS ONE MY HURRICANE PITCH!
AAH!!!
DID YOU THROW IT IN A HURRICANE?
Sorry, my bad!
IT HAS TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.

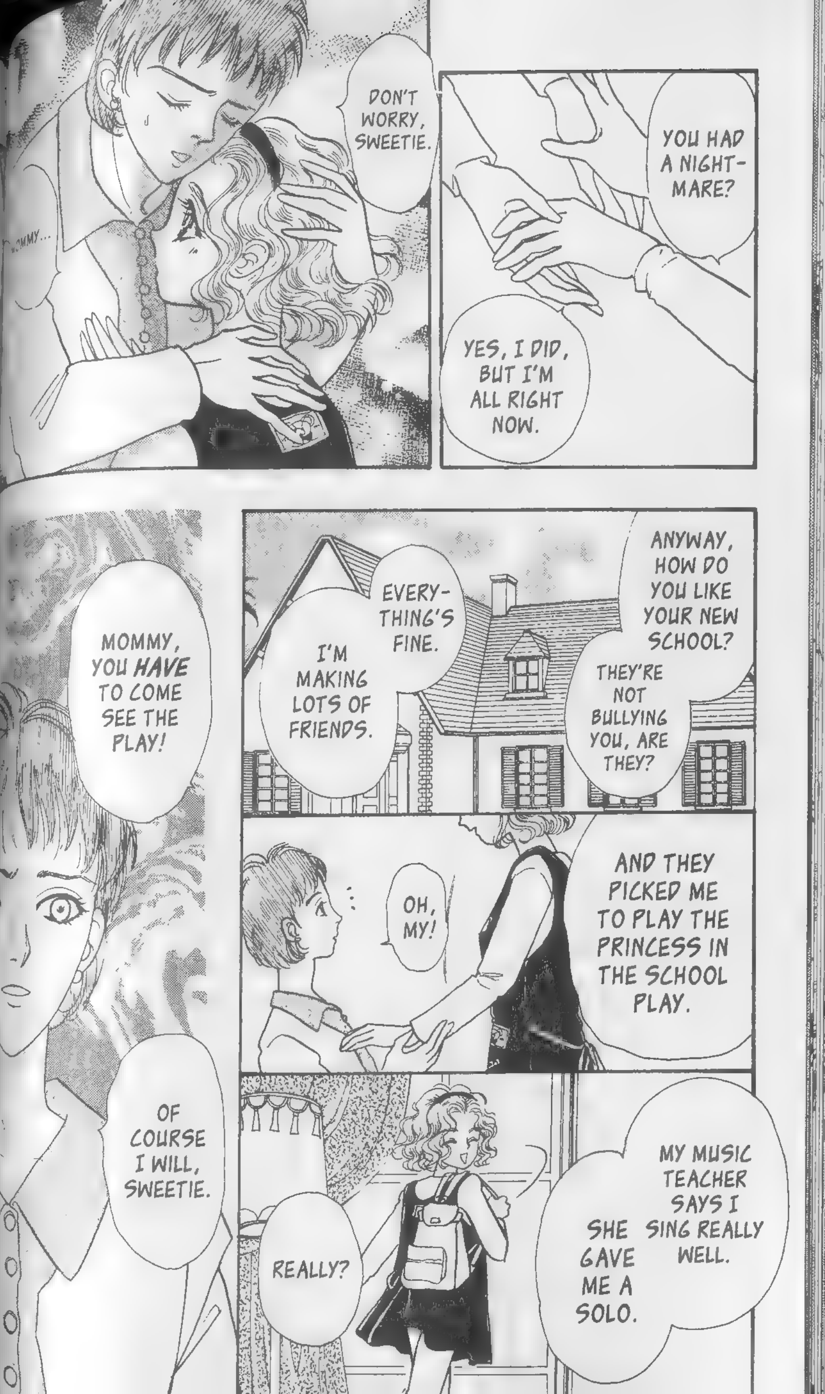

HEY, CHRIS!
FIND THE BALL YET?
Um... Oh!
Huh?

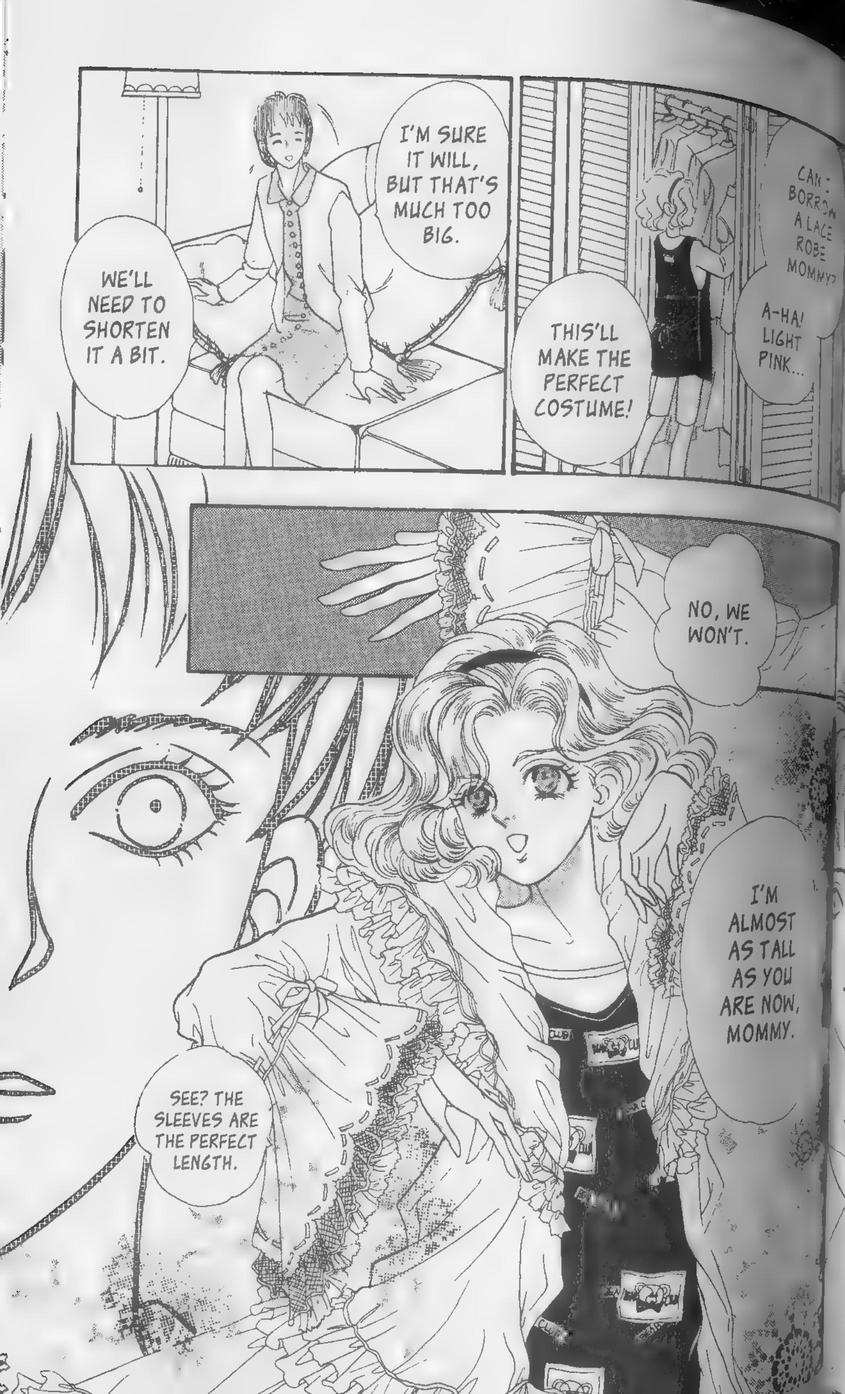

WHAT SORT OF WIMP GOES TO THE PARK TO TAKE A NAP?
WHAT?!
HUH?
?!
HE WAS SURROUNDED BY A BUNCH OF FLOATING WOMEN A SECOND AGO!
RUB
HEY, THERE'S THE BALL!
DARN...
flutter
YO, COUNT!
IT'S OKAY, BIG BRO. I'LL GO GET IT.
Hmm
HUH?
WHEN DID HE CHANGE?
THAT WASN'T THE DRESS HE HAD ON WHEN WE LEFT.

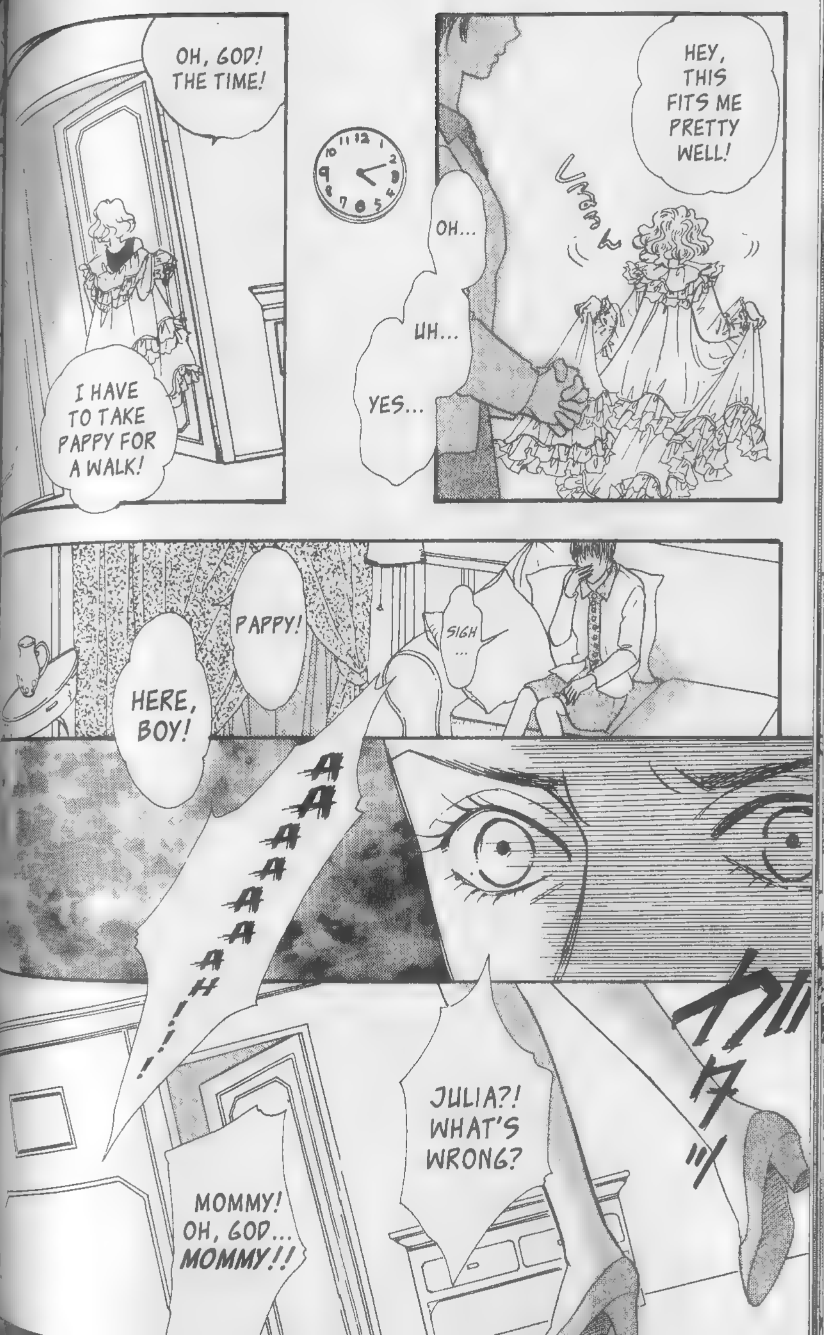

MAN, LOOK AT ALL OF THEM!
THEY'RE MIGRATORY BUTTERFLIES.
JESUS! I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN SO MANY!
THEY TRAVEL FROM CANADA TO AS FAR SOUTH AS MEXICO JUST TO AVOID THE WINTER COLD.
MAN, IT'S BAD ENOUGH WE GET THEIR MUSIC, DO WE REALLY NEED CANADA'S BUGS, TOO?
JUST A LITTLE LONGER, EVERYONE.
HANG ON JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE.
AAAAH!
THE HELL?!
AH!
OKAY, D, WHAT'S WITH ALL THE BUTTERFLIES?
HEH HEH HEH ...
THEY DECIDED TO TAKE A NAP ON MY ROBE, THINKING THAT THESE WERE REAL FLOWERS.

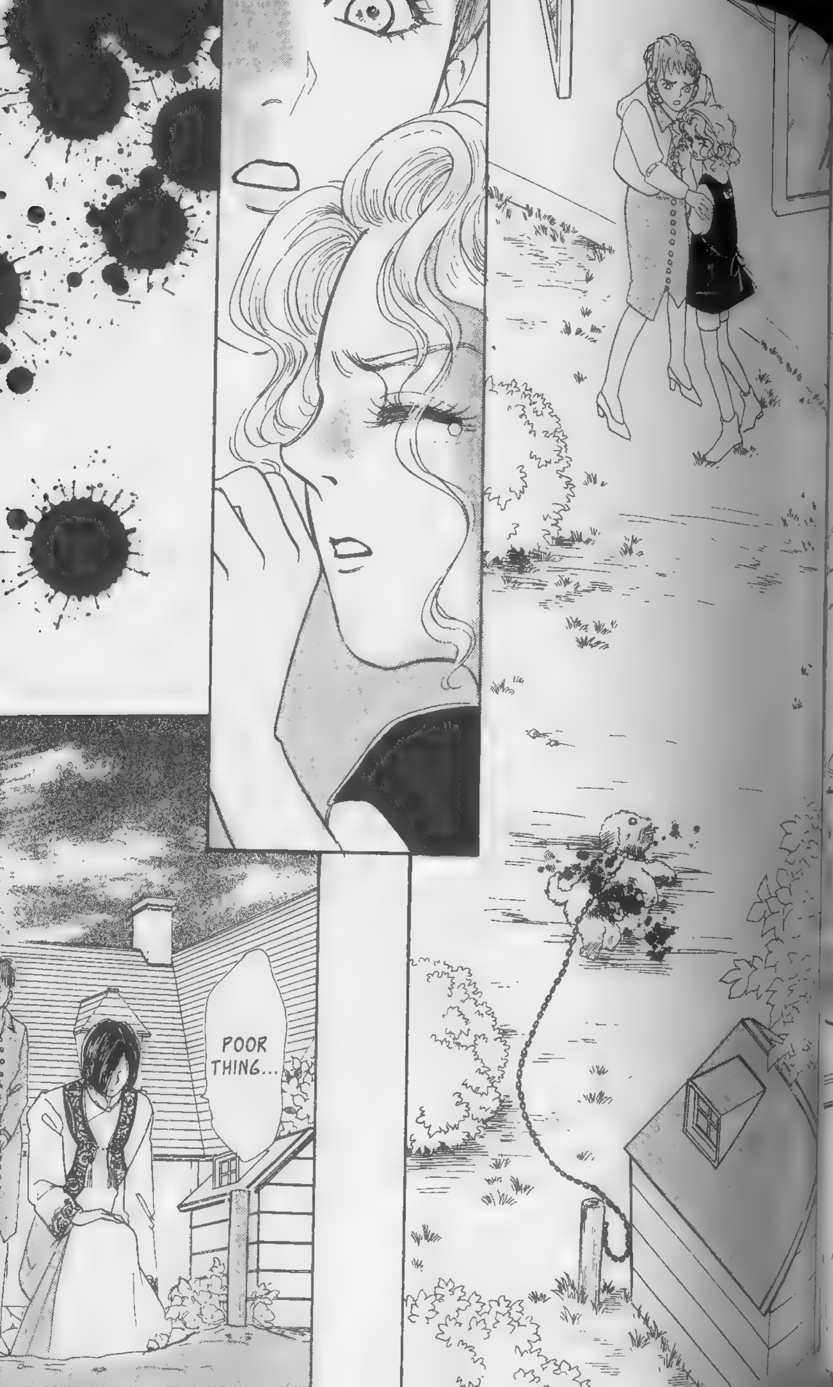

ミシッ
huff
hah
huh
huff
huff
WHO'S THERE?!
ミシッ
COME BACK!
YOU'RE NOT GETTING
huff
huh
STOP! STAY AWAY!!
NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE...
NO MATTER WHERE YOU RUN...
WHERE ARE YOU
wheeze
huff
huh huff
ギシッ

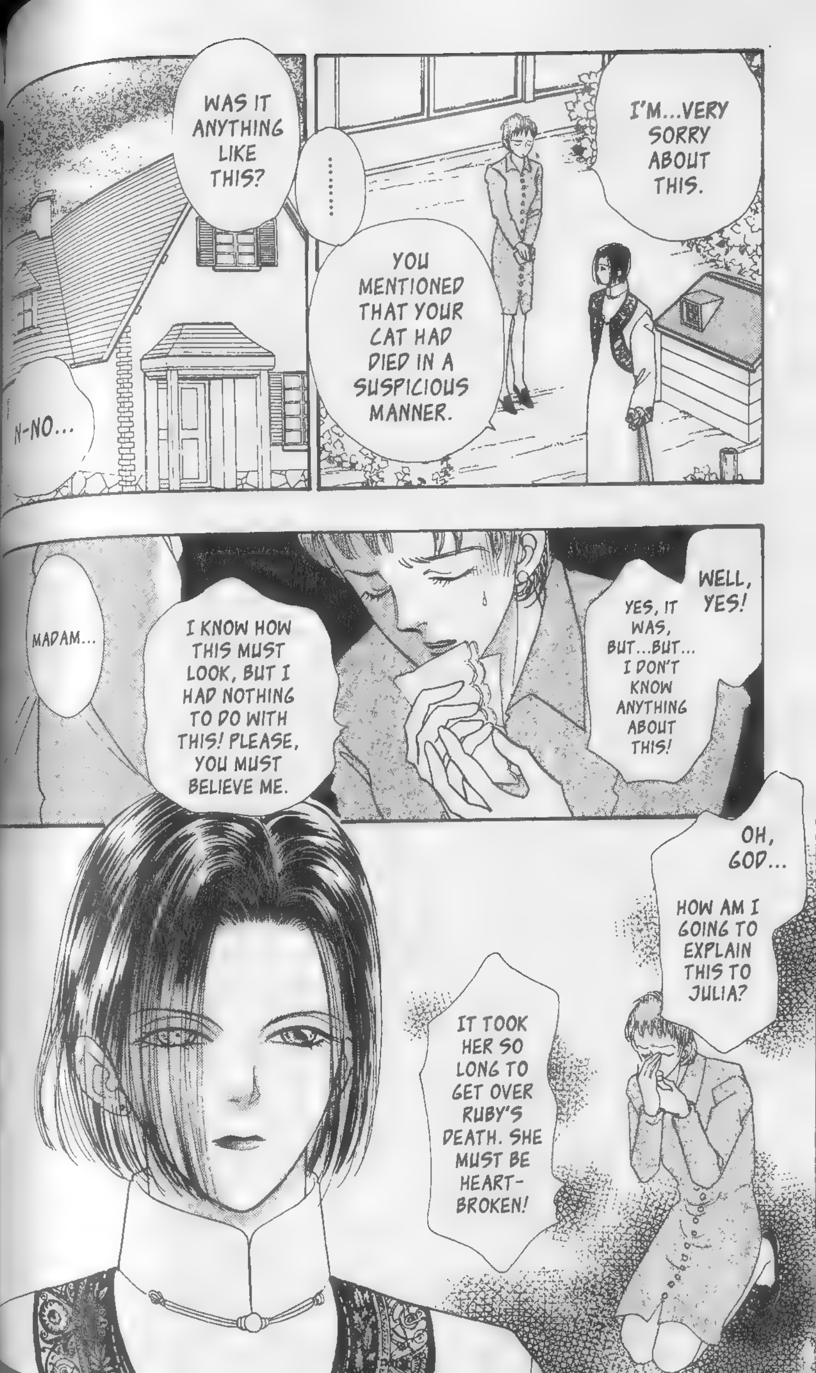

ハッ
...I WILL FIND YOU!
ガバッ
AAAAAAAAH!
MOMMY?
AH?
J-JULIA...?
I'M BACK!
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE ALL SWEATY.
OH...
IT'S NOTHING... MOMMY WAS JUST TAKING A NAP.

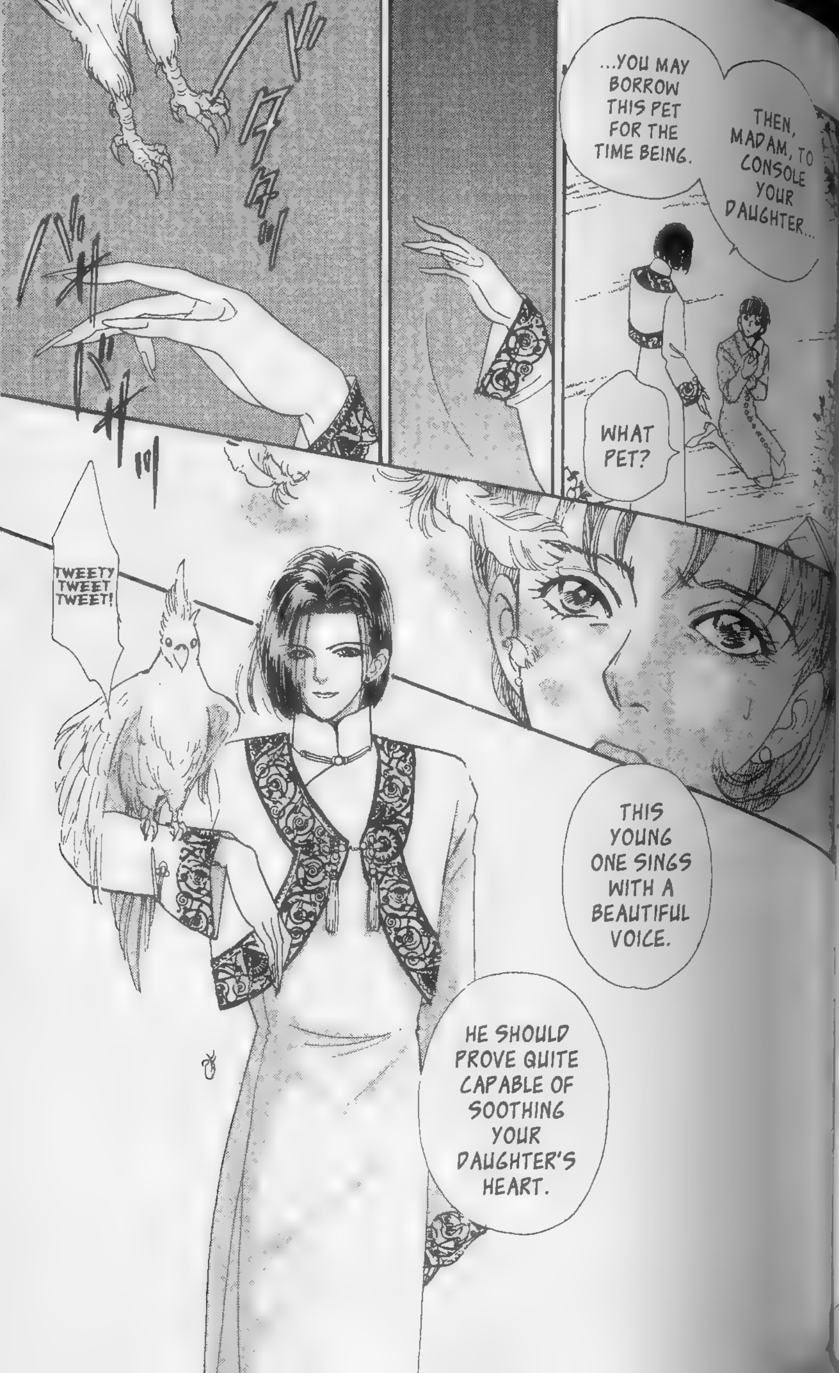

YOU HAD A NIGHT-MARE?
YES, I DID, BUT I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
DON'T WORRY, SWEETIE.
MOMMY...
ANYWAY, HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEW SCHOOL?
THEY'RE NOT BULLYING YOU, ARE THEY?
EVERY-THING'S FINE.
I'M MAKING LOTS OF FRIENDS.
AND THEY PICKED ME TO PLAY THE PRINCESS IN THE SCHOOL PLAY.
OH, MY!
MY MUSIC TEACHER SAYS I SING REALLY WELL.
SHE GAVE ME A SOLO.
REALLY?
MOMMY, YOU **HAVE** TO COME SEE THE PLAY!
OF COURSE I WILL, SWEETIE.

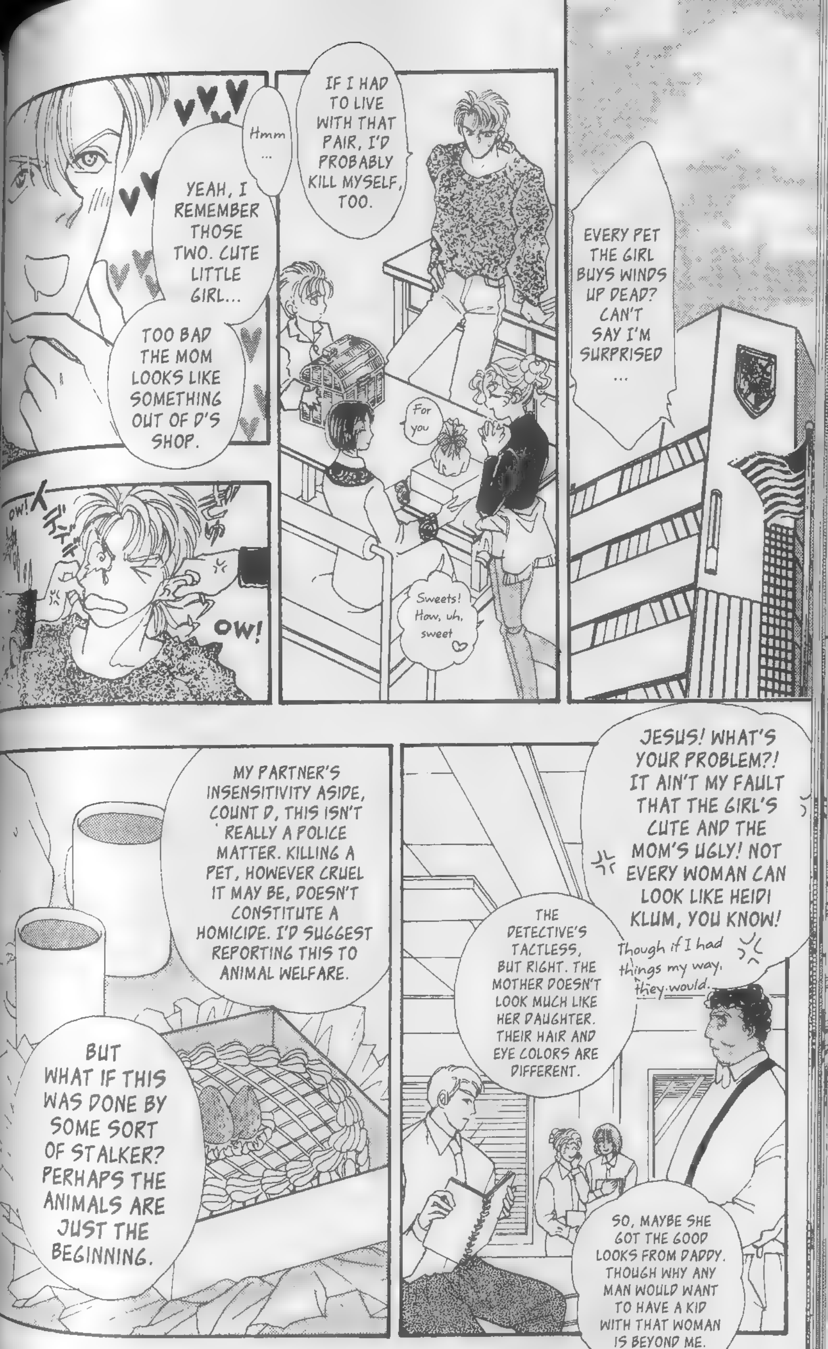

CAN I BORROW A LACE ROBE MOMMY?
A-HA! LIGHT PINK...
THIS'LL MAKE THE PERFECT COSTUME!
I'M SURE IT WILL, BUT THAT'S MUCH TOO BIG.
WE'LL NEED TO SHORTEN IT A BIT.
NO, WE WON'T.
I'M ALMOST AS TALL AS YOU ARE NOW, MOMMY.
SEE? THE SLEEVES ARE THE PERFECT LENGTH.

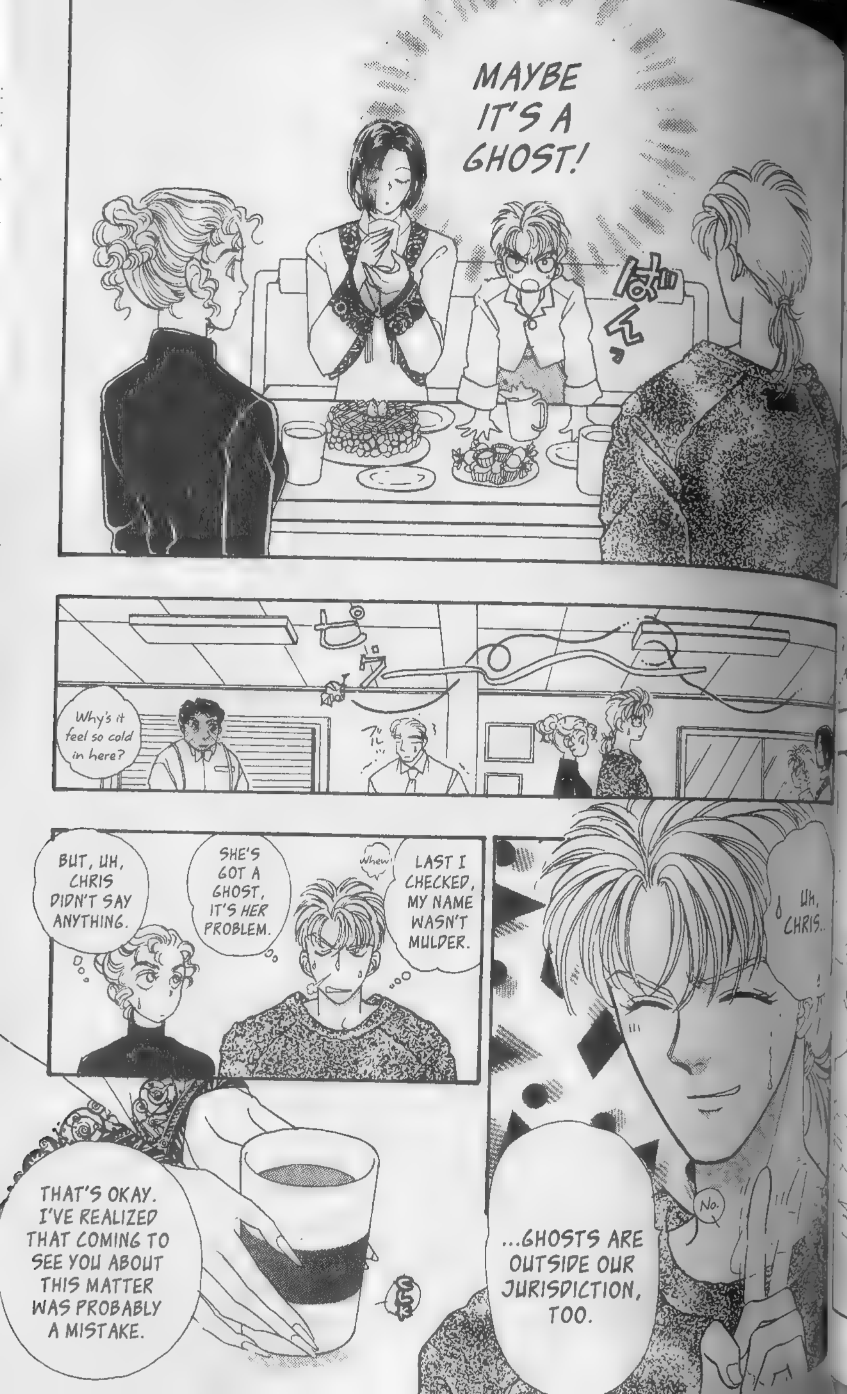

HEY, THIS FITS ME PRETTY WELL!
Umm~
OH... UH... YES...
OH, GOD! THE TIME!
I HAVE TO TAKE PAPPY FOR A WALK!
SIGH...
PAPPY!
HERE, BOY!
AAAAAAAAH!!!
ガタッ
JULIA?! WHAT'S WRONG?
MOMMY! OH, GOD... **MOMMY!!**

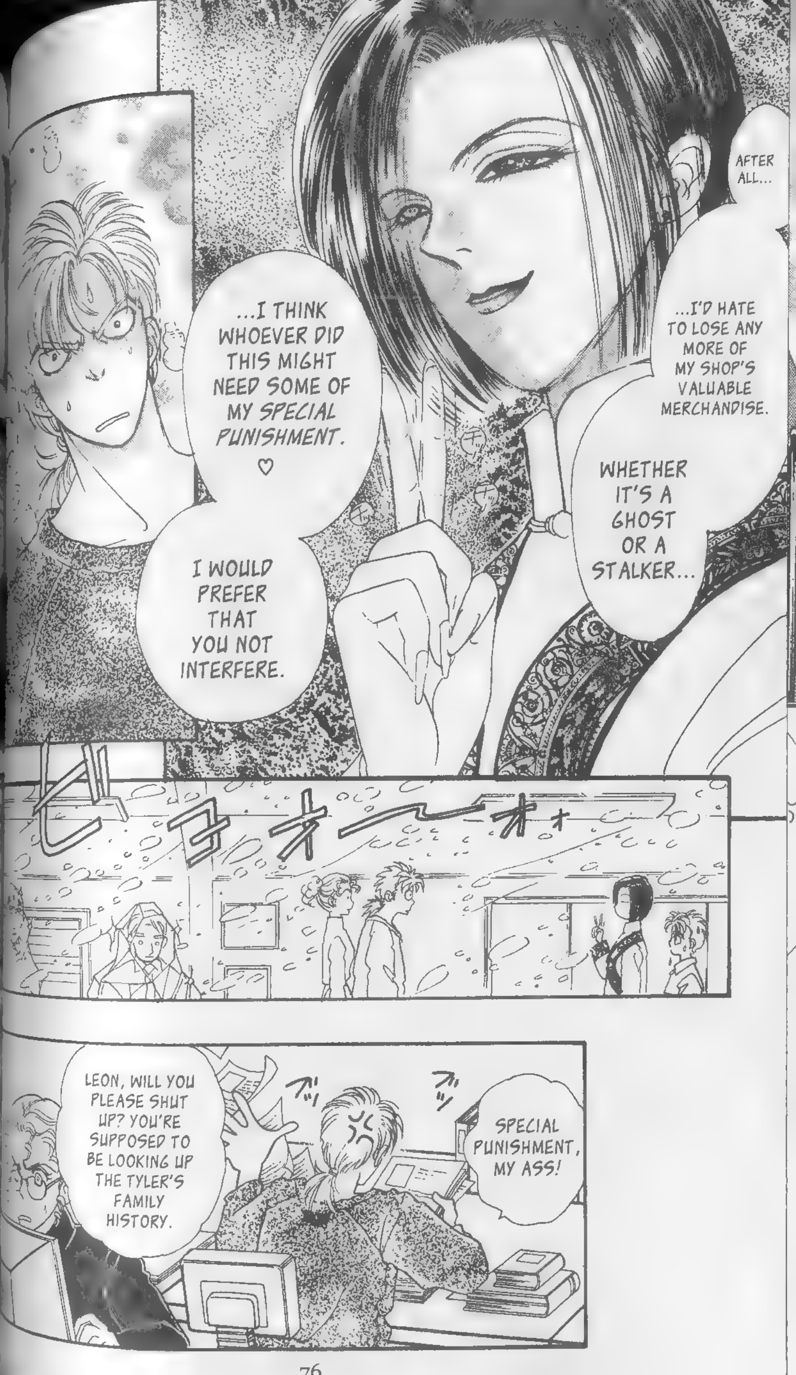

POOR THING...

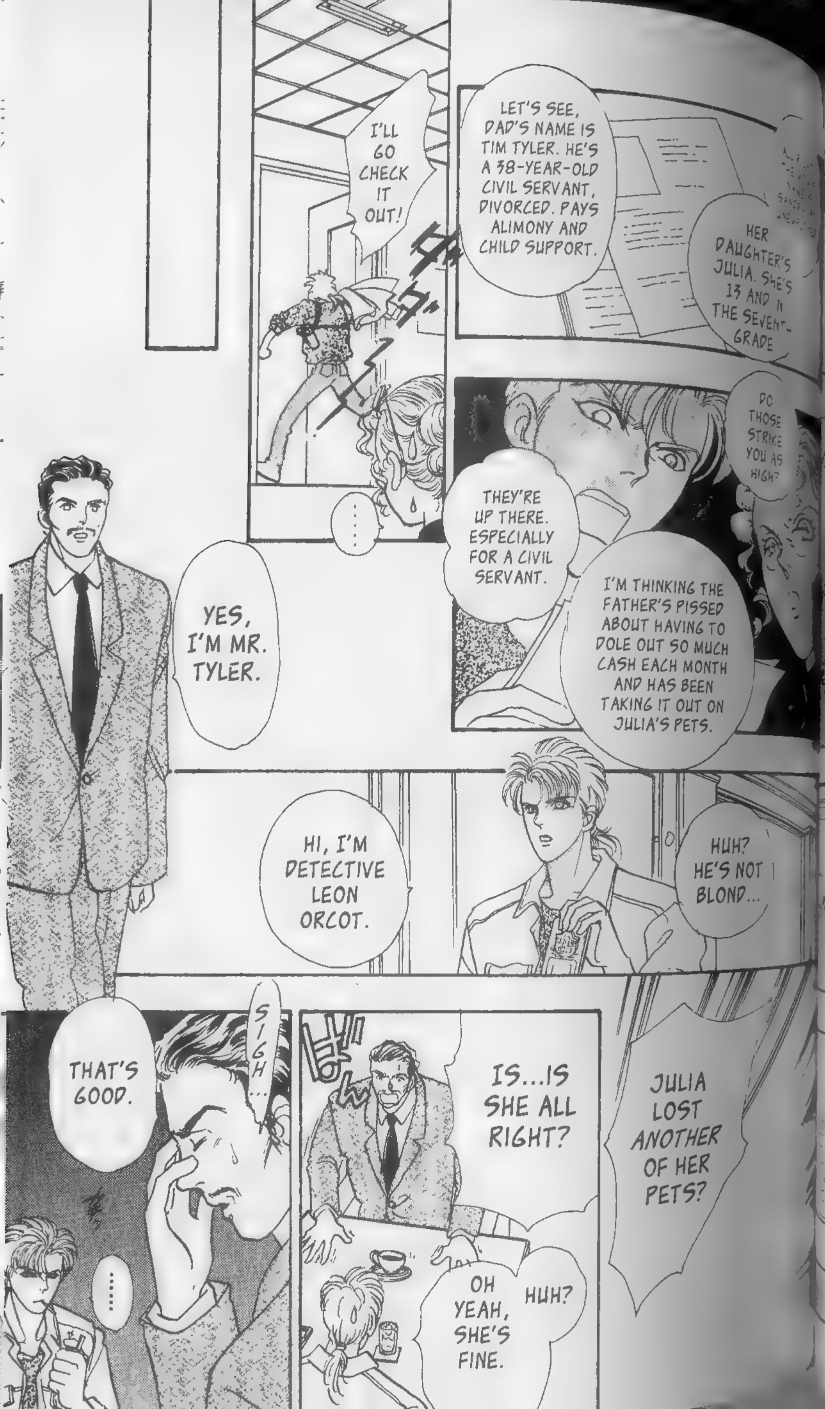

I'M...VERY SORRY ABOUT THIS.
YOU MENTIONED THAT YOUR CAT HAD DIED IN A SUSPICIOUS MANNER.
WAS IT ANYTHING LIKE THIS?
......
N-NO...
WELL, YES!
YES, IT WAS, BUT...BUT... I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS!
MADAM...
I KNOW HOW THIS MUST LOOK, BUT I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS! PLEASE, YOU MUST BELIEVE ME.
OH, GOD...
HOW AM I GOING TO EXPLAIN THIS TO JULIA?
IT TOOK HER SO LONG TO GET OVER RUBY'S DEATH. SHE MUST BE HEART-BROKEN!

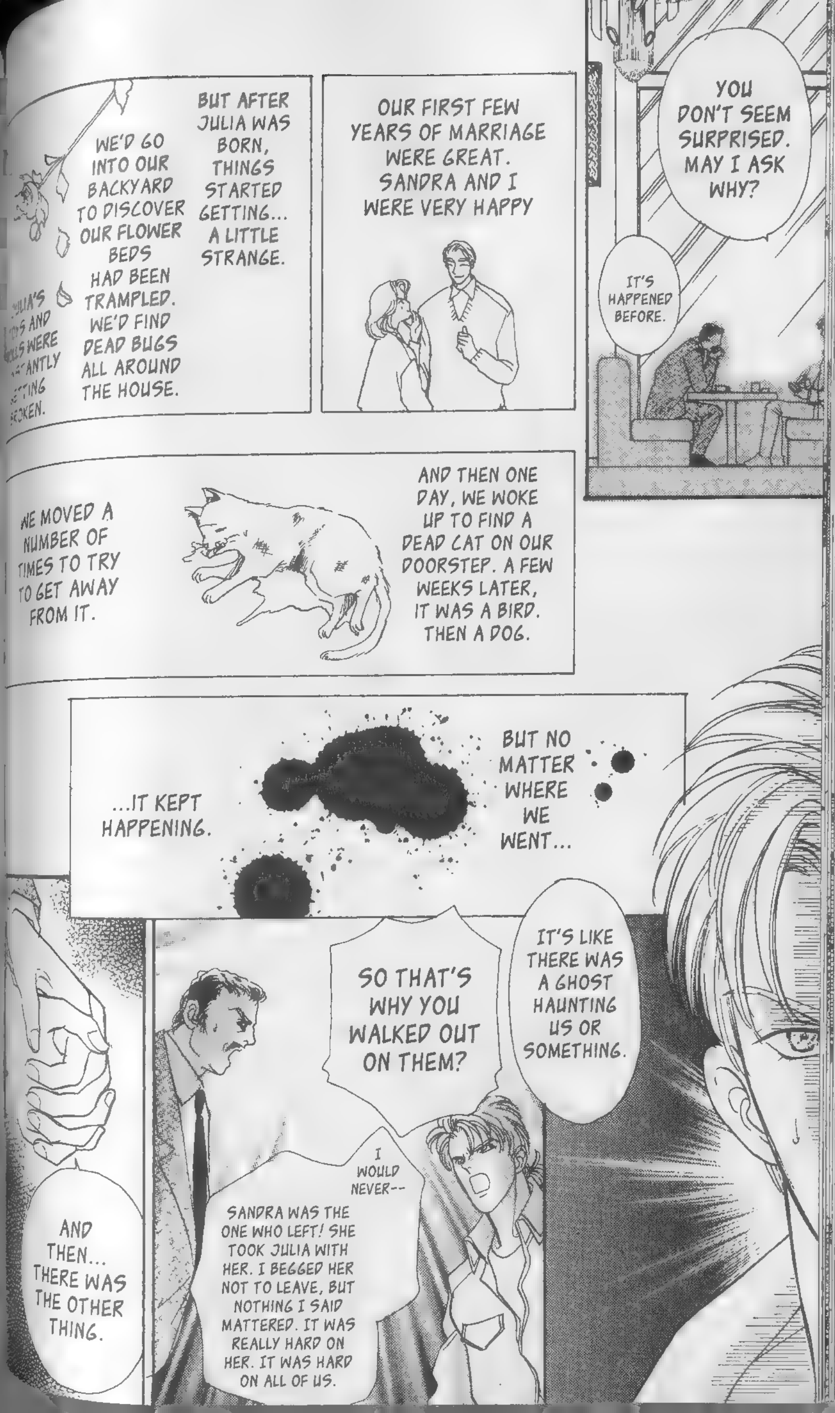

THEN, MADAM, TO CONSOLE YOUR DAUGHTER...
...YOU MAY BORROW THIS PET FOR THE TIME BEING.
WHAT PET?
TWEETY TWEET TWEET!
THIS YOUNG ONE SINGS WITH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE.
HE SHOULD PROVE QUITE CAPABLE OF SOOTHING YOUR DAUGHTER'S HEART.

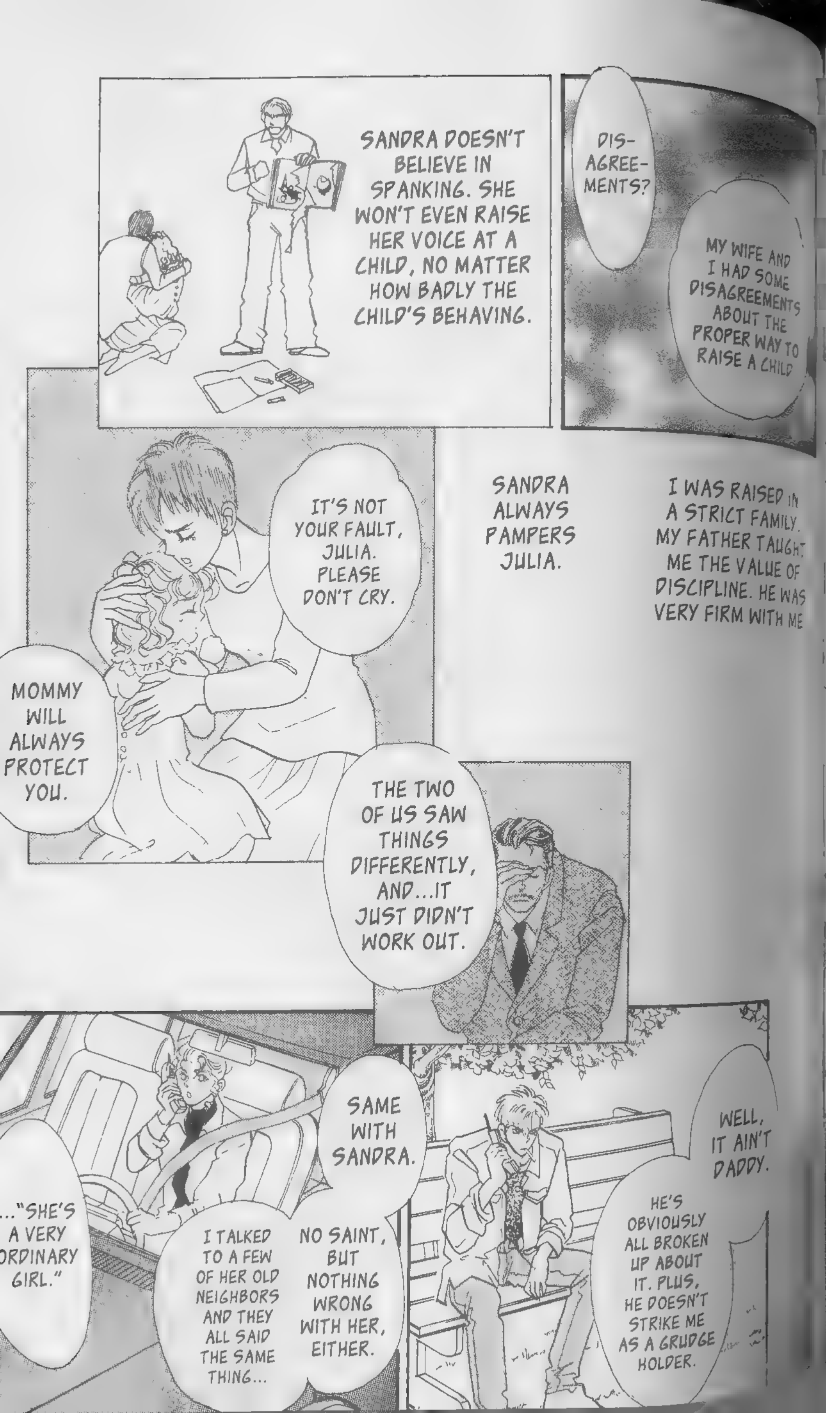

EVERY PET THE GIRL BUYS WINDS UP DEAD? CAN'T SAY I'M SURPRISED ...
IF I HAD TO LIVE WITH THAT PAIR, I'D PROBABLY KILL MYSELF, TOO.
For you
Sweets! How, uh, sweet ♡
Hmm ...
YEAH, I REMEMBER THOSE TWO. CUTE LITTLE GIRL...
TOO BAD THE MOM LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF D'S SHOP.
OW!
OW!
JESUS! WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?! IT AIN'T MY FAULT THAT THE GIRL'S CUTE AND THE MOM'S UGLY! NOT EVERY WOMAN CAN LOOK LIKE HEIDI KLUM, YOU KNOW!
Though if I had things my way, they would.
THE DETECTIVE'S TACTLESS, BUT RIGHT. THE MOTHER DOESN'T LOOK MUCH LIKE HER DAUGHTER. THEIR HAIR AND EYE COLORS ARE DIFFERENT.
SO, MAYBE SHE GOT THE GOOD LOOKS FROM DADDY. THOUGH WHY ANY MAN WOULD WANT TO HAVE A KID WITH THAT WOMAN IS BEYOND ME.
MY PARTNER'S INSENSITIVITY ASIDE, COUNT D, THIS ISN'T REALLY A POLICE MATTER. KILLING A PET, HOWEVER CRUEL IT MAY BE, DOESN'T CONSTITUTE A HOMICIDE. I'D SUGGEST REPORTING THIS TO ANIMAL WELFARE.
BUT WHAT IF THIS WAS DONE BY SOME SORT OF STALKER? PERHAPS THE ANIMALS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING.

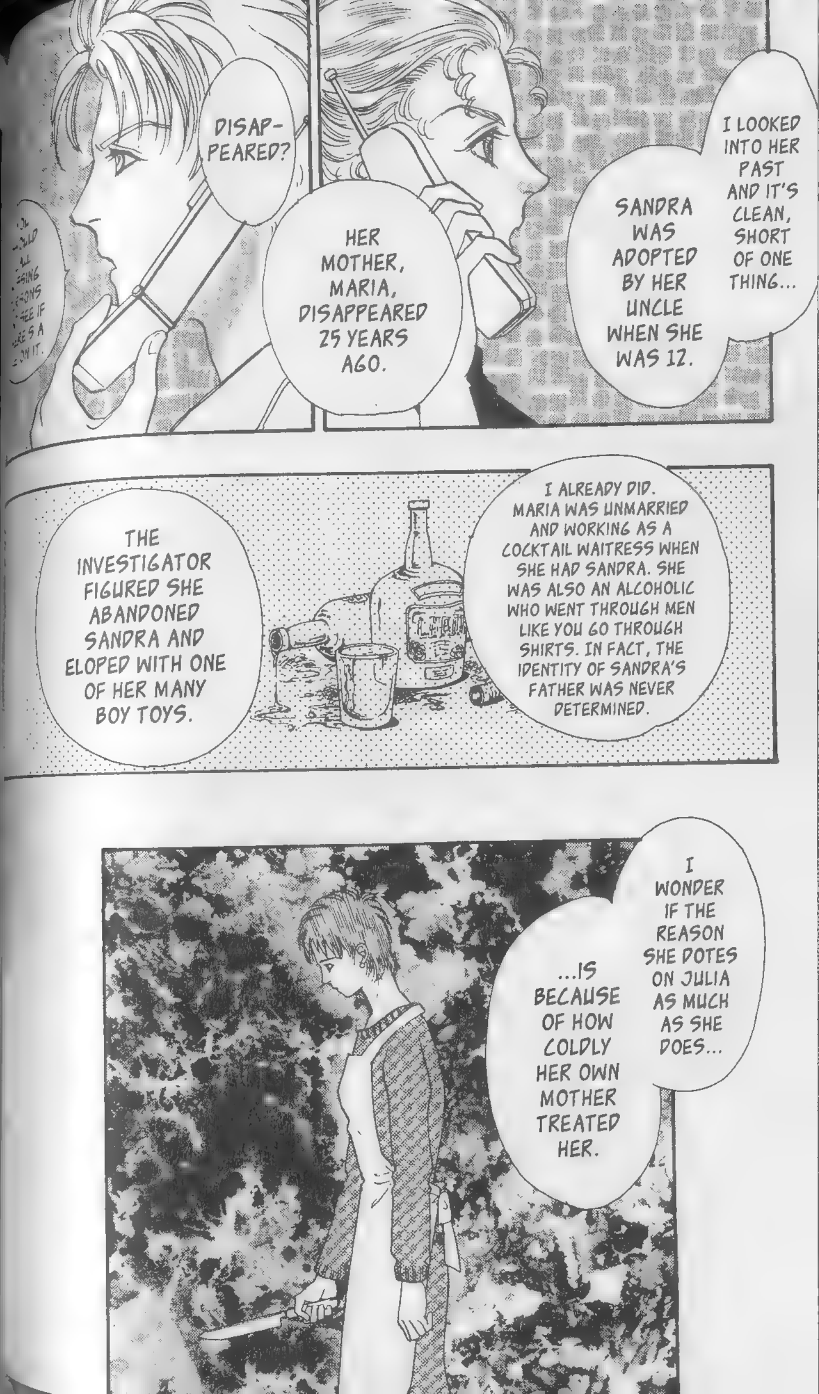

MAYBE IT'S A GHOST!
ばんっ
Why's it feel so cold in here?
LAST I CHECKED, MY NAME WASN'T MULDER.
Whew
SHE'S GOT A GHOST, IT'S HER PROBLEM.
BUT, UH, CHRIS DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
UH, CHRIS..
No.
...GHOSTS ARE OUTSIDE OUR JURISDICTION, TOO.
THAT'S OKAY. I'VE REALIZED THAT COMING TO SEE YOU ABOUT THIS MATTER WAS PROBABLY A MISTAKE.
CLK

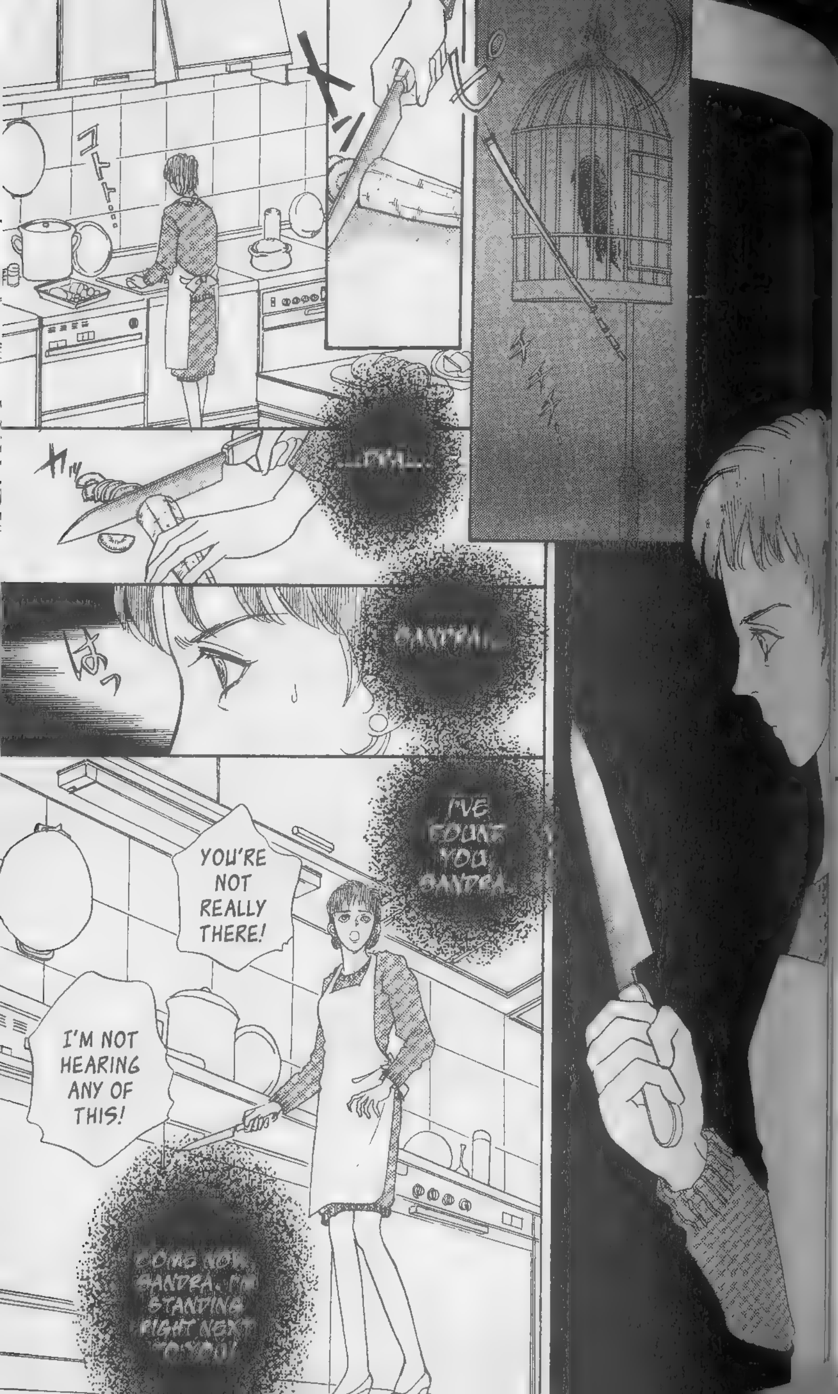

AFTER ALL...
...I'D HATE TO LOSE ANY MORE OF MY SHOP'S VALUABLE MERCHANDISE.
WHETHER IT'S A GHOST OR A STALKER...
...I THINK WHOEVER DID THIS MIGHT NEED SOME OF MY *SPECIAL PUNISHMENT*. ♡
I WOULD PREFER THAT YOU NOT INTERFERE.
SPECIAL PUNISHMENT, MY ASS!
LEON, WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT UP? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING UP THE TYLER'S FAMILY HISTORY.

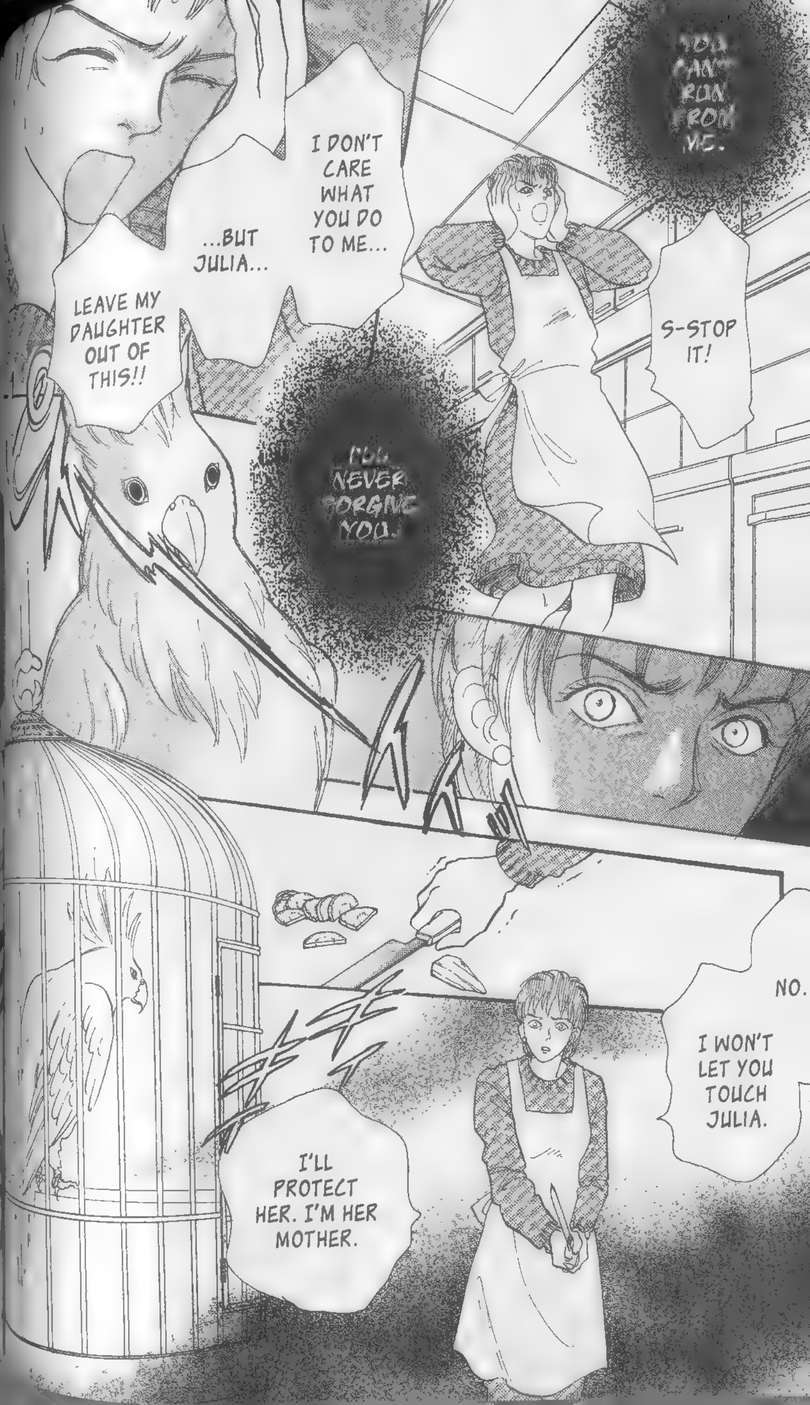

HER DAUGHTER'S JULIA. SHE'S 13 AND IN THE SEVENTH GRADE
LET'S SEE, DAD'S NAME IS TIM TYLER. HE'S A 38-YEAR-OLD CIVIL SERVANT, DIVORCED. PAYS ALIMONY AND CHILD SUPPORT.
I'LL GO CHECK IT OUT!
DO THOSE STRIKE YOU AS HIGH?
THEY'RE UP THERE. ESPECIALLY FOR A CIVIL SERVANT.
I'M THINKING THE FATHER'S PISSED ABOUT HAVING TO DOLE OUT SO MUCH CASH EACH MONTH AND HAS BEEN TAKING IT OUT ON JULIA'S PETS.
......
YES, I'M MR. TYLER.
HUH? HE'S NOT BLOND...
HI, I'M DETECTIVE LEON ORCOT.
IS...IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
JULIA LOST *ANOTHER* OF HER PETS?
HUH?
OH YEAH, SHE'S FINE.
SIGH...
THAT'S GOOD.
......

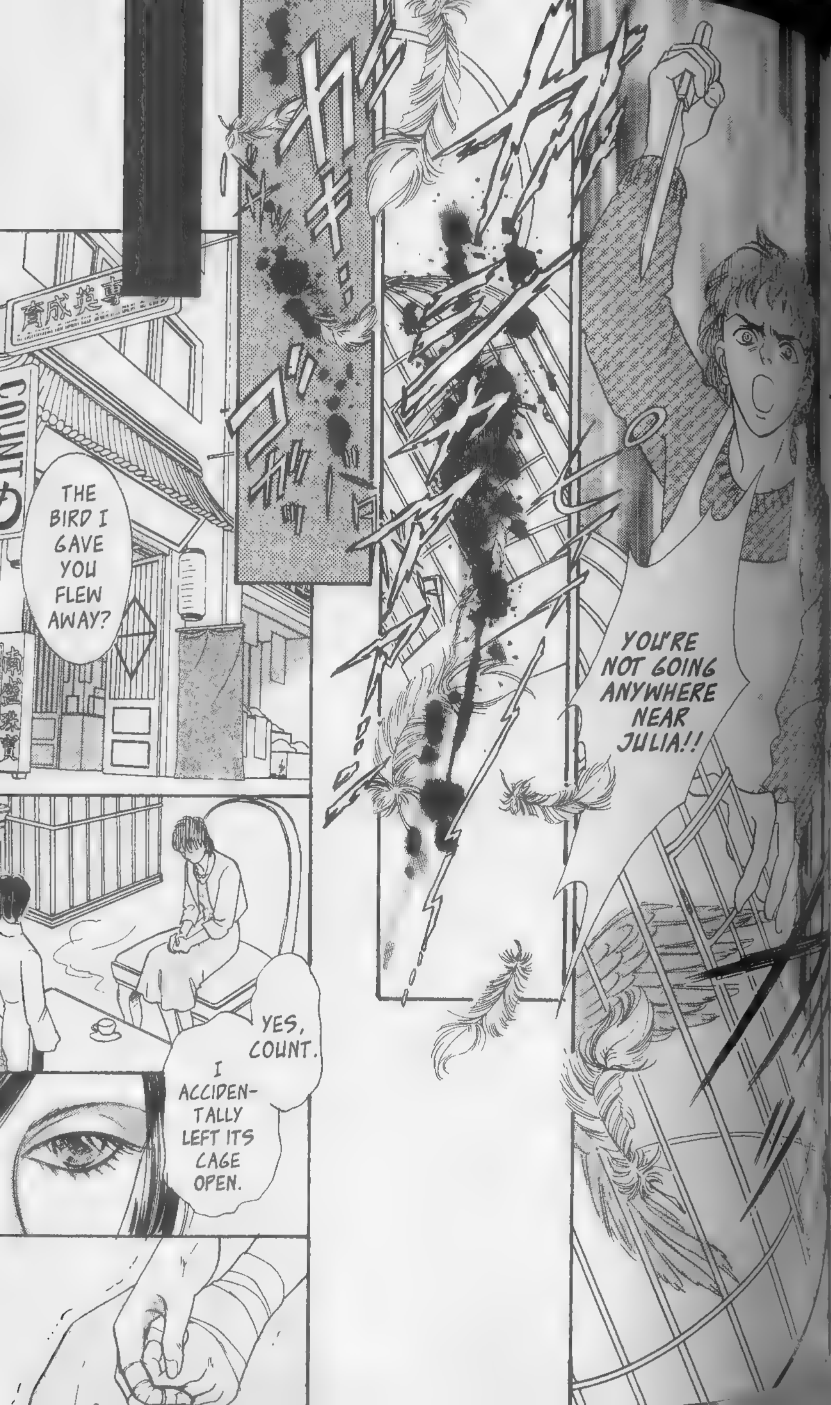

YOU DON'T SEEM SURPRISED. MAY I ASK WHY?
IT'S HAPPENED BEFORE.
OUR FIRST FEW YEARS OF MARRIAGE WERE GREAT. SANDRA AND I WERE VERY HAPPY
BUT AFTER JULIA WAS BORN, THINGS STARTED GETTING... A LITTLE STRANGE.
WE'D GO INTO OUR BACKYARD TO DISCOVER OUR FLOWER BEDS HAD BEEN TRAMPLED. WE'D FIND DEAD BUGS ALL AROUND THE HOUSE.
ULIA'S YS AND LLS WERE ANTLY TTING OKEN.
AND THEN ONE DAY, WE WOKE UP TO FIND A DEAD CAT ON OUR DOORSTEP. A FEW WEEKS LATER, IT WAS A BIRD. THEN A DOG.
WE MOVED A NUMBER OF TIMES TO TRY TO GET AWAY FROM IT.
BUT NO MATTER WHERE WE WENT...
...IT KEPT HAPPENING.
IT'S LIKE THERE WAS A GHOST HAUNTING US OR SOMETHING.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WALKED OUT ON THEM?
I WOULD NEVER--
SANDRA WAS THE ONE WHO LEFT! SHE TOOK JULIA WITH HER. I BEGGED HER NOT TO LEAVE, BUT NOTHING I SAID MATTERED. IT WAS REALLY HARD ON HER. IT WAS HARD ON ALL OF US.
AND THEN... THERE WAS THE OTHER THING.

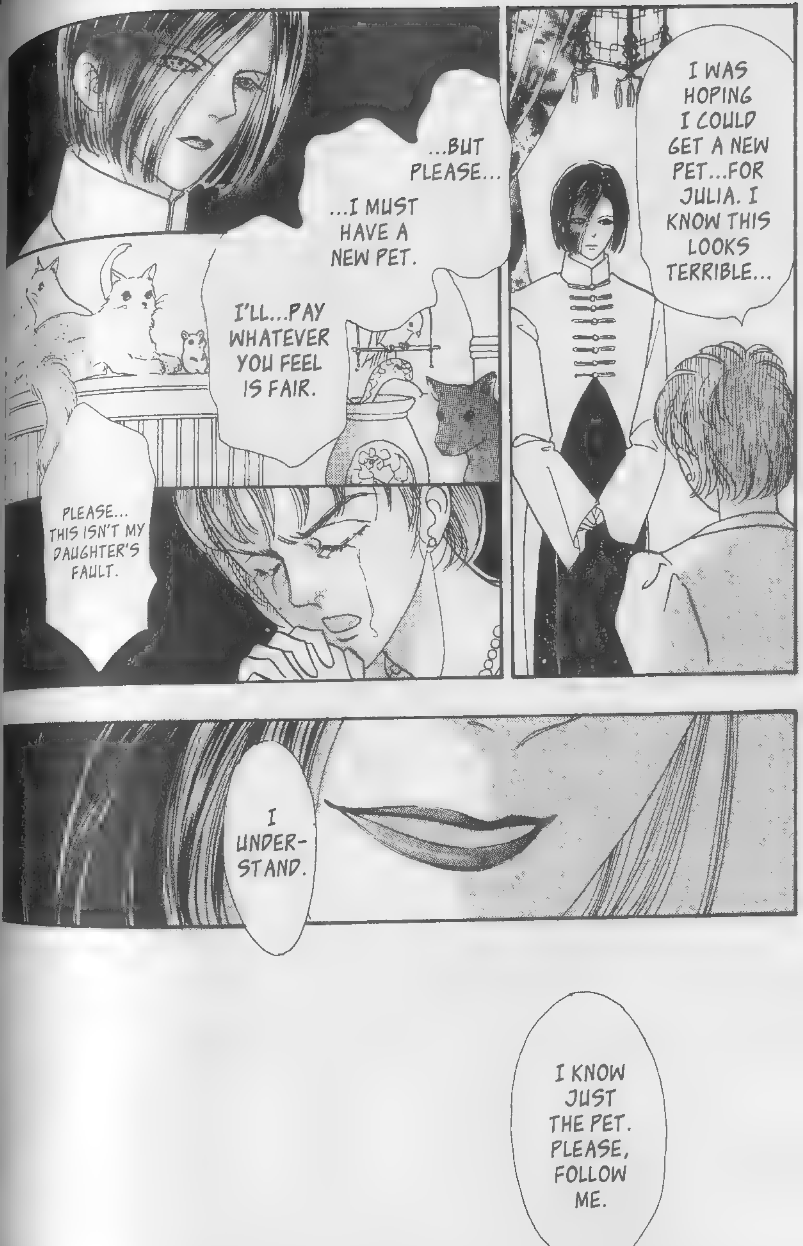

DIS-AGREE-MENTS?
MY WIFE AND I HAD SOME DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT THE PROPER WAY TO RAISE A CHILD
SANDRA DOESN'T BELIEVE IN SPANKING. SHE WON'T EVEN RAISE HER VOICE AT A CHILD, NO MATTER HOW BADLY THE CHILD'S BEHAVING.
I WAS RAISED IN A STRICT FAMILY. MY FATHER TAUGHT ME THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINE. HE WAS VERY FIRM WITH ME
SANDRA ALWAYS PAMPERS JULIA.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, JULIA. PLEASE DON'T CRY.
MOMMY WILL ALWAYS PROTECT YOU.
THE TWO OF US SAW THINGS DIFFERENTLY, AND...IT JUST DIDN'T WORK OUT.
WELL, IT AIN'T DADDY.
HE'S OBVIOUSLY ALL BROKEN UP ABOUT IT. PLUS, HE DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS A GRUDGE HOLDER.
SAME WITH SANDRA.
NO SAINT, BUT NOTHING WRONG WITH HER, EITHER.
I TALKED TO A FEW OF HER OLD NEIGHBORS AND THEY ALL SAID THE SAME THING...
..."SHE'S A VERY RDINARY GIRL."

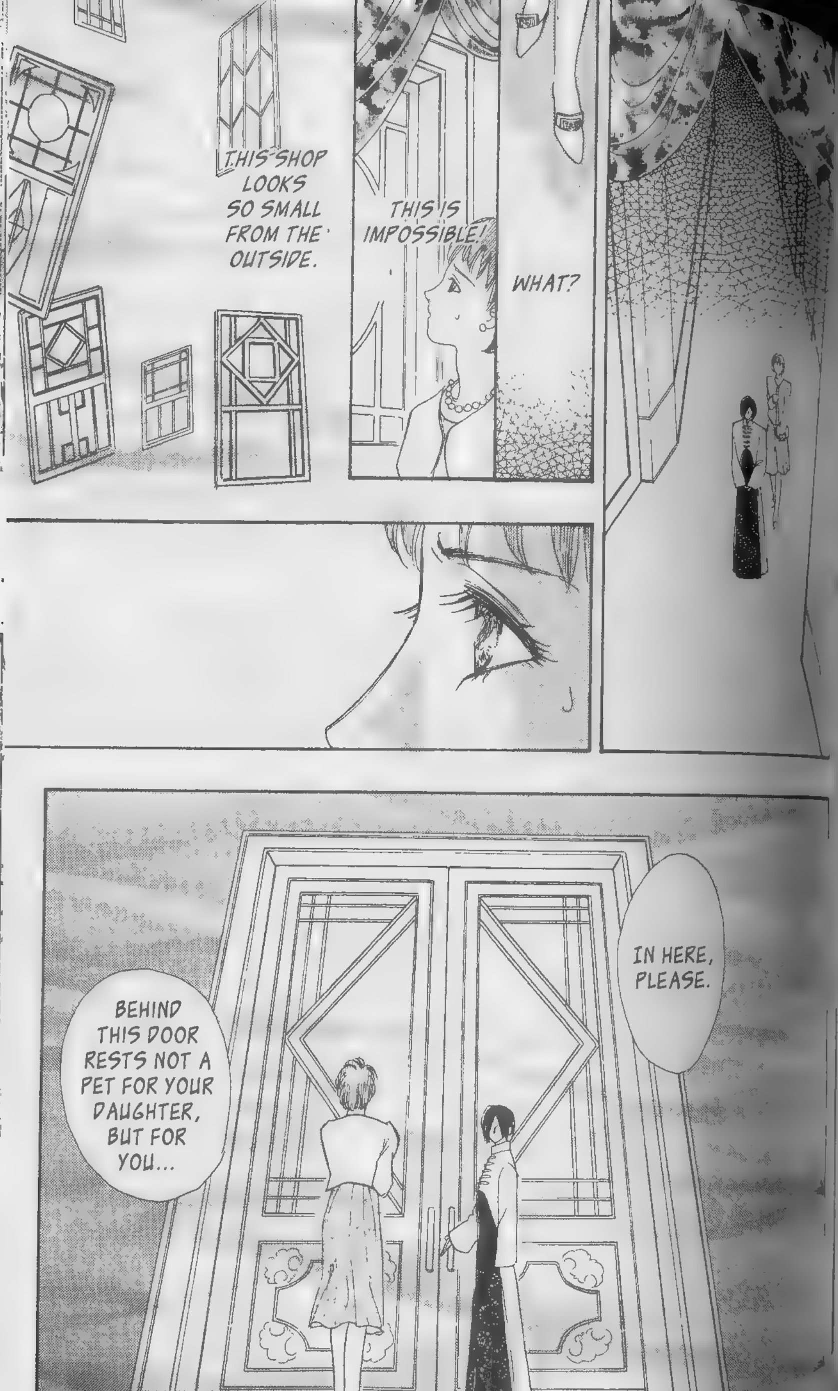

I LOOKED INTO HER PAST AND IT'S CLEAN, SHORT OF ONE THING...
SANDRA WAS ADOPTED BY HER UNCLE WHEN SHE WAS 12.
HER MOTHER, MARIA, DISAPPEARED 25 YEARS AGO.
DISAPPEARED?
I ALREADY DID. MARIA WAS UNMARRIED AND WORKING AS A COCKTAIL WAITRESS WHEN SHE HAD SANDRA. SHE WAS ALSO AN ALCOHOLIC WHO WENT THROUGH MEN LIKE YOU GO THROUGH SHIRTS. IN FACT, THE IDENTITY OF SANDRA'S FATHER WAS NEVER DETERMINED.
THE INVESTIGATOR FIGURED SHE ABANDONED SANDRA AND ELOPED WITH ONE OF HER MANY BOY TOYS.
I WONDER IF THE REASON SHE DOTES ON JULIA AS MUCH AS SHE DOES...
...IS BECAUSE OF HOW COLDLY HER OWN MOTHER TREATED HER.

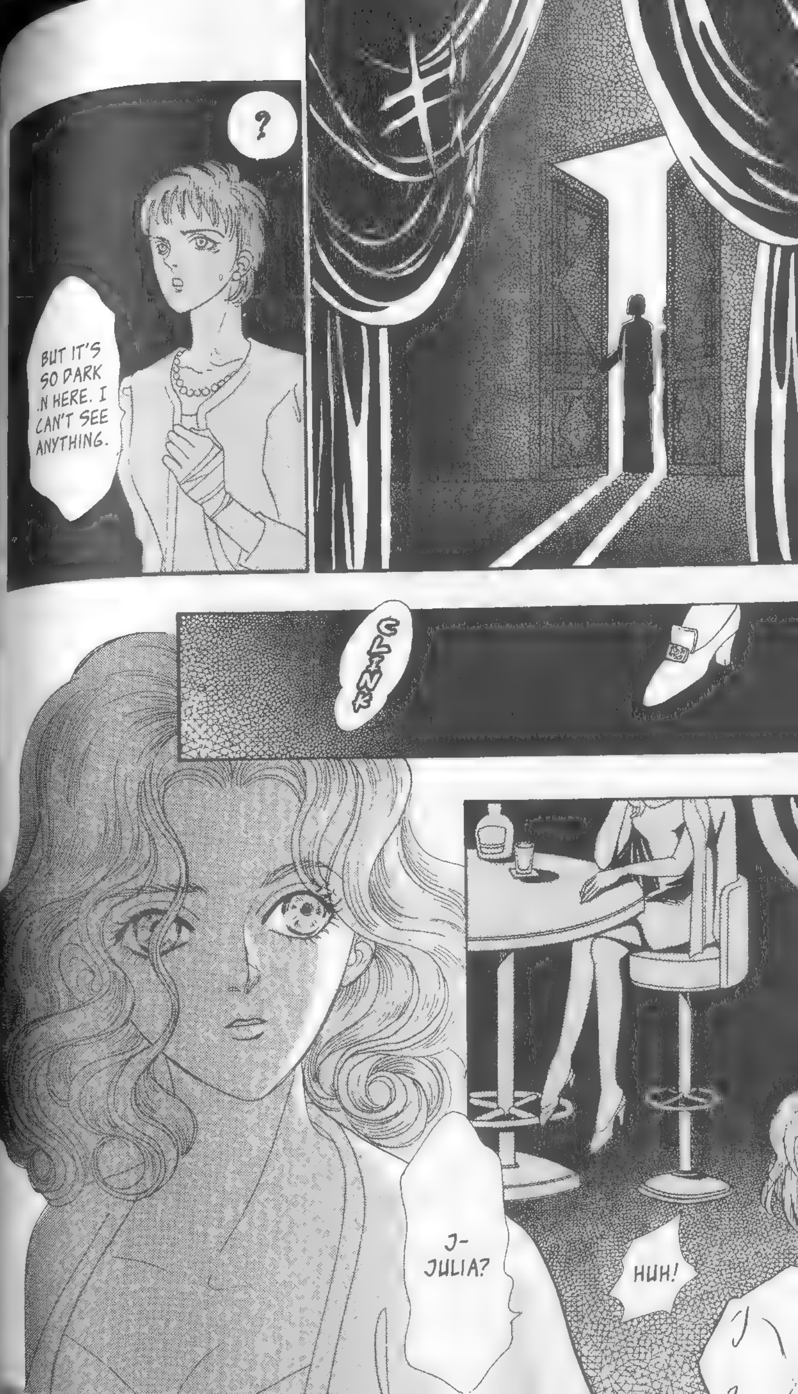

コトトト
...DRA...
SANDRA...
I'VE FOUND YOU SANDRA.
YOU'RE NOT REALLY THERE!
I'M NOT HEARING ANY OF THIS!
COME NOW, SANDRA. I'M STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO YOU!

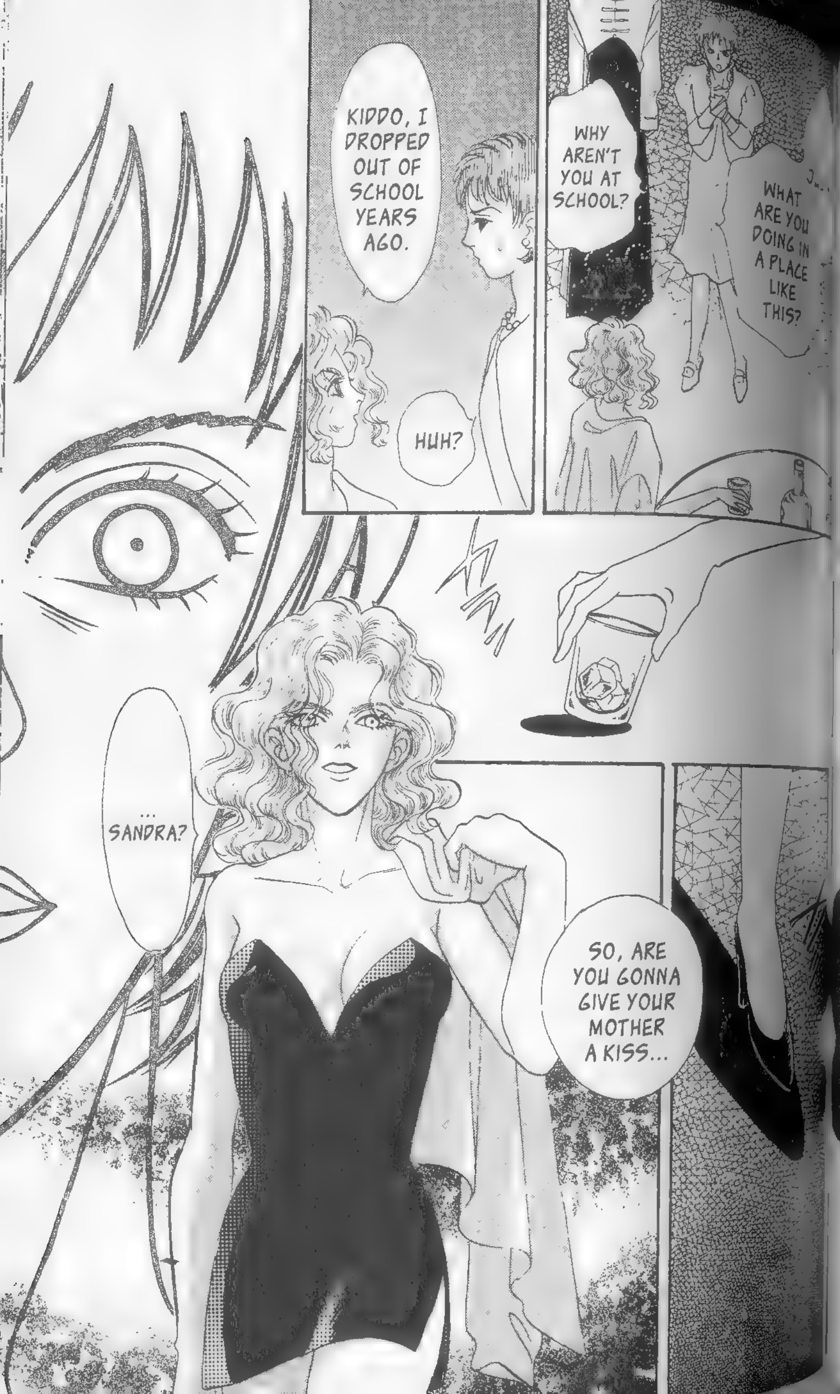

YOU CAN'T RUN FROM ME.
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO TO ME...
...BUT JULIA...
LEAVE MY DAUGHTER OUT OF THIS!!
S-STOP IT!
I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.
NO.
I WON'T LET YOU TOUCH JULIA.
I'LL PROTECT HER. I'M HER MOTHER.

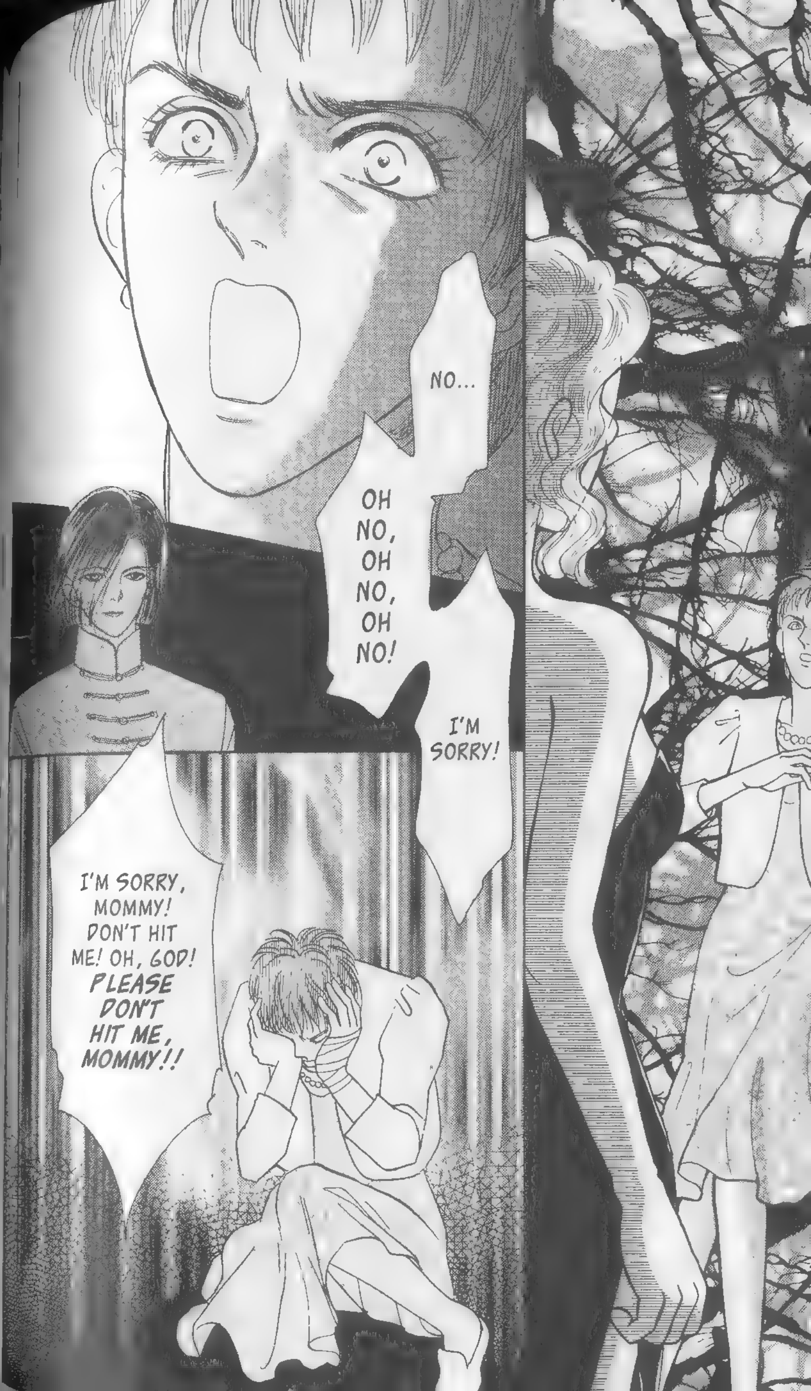

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE NEAR JULIA!!
COUNT D
THE BIRD I GAVE YOU FLEW AWAY?
YES, COUNT.
I ACCIDENTALLY LEFT ITS CAGE OPEN.

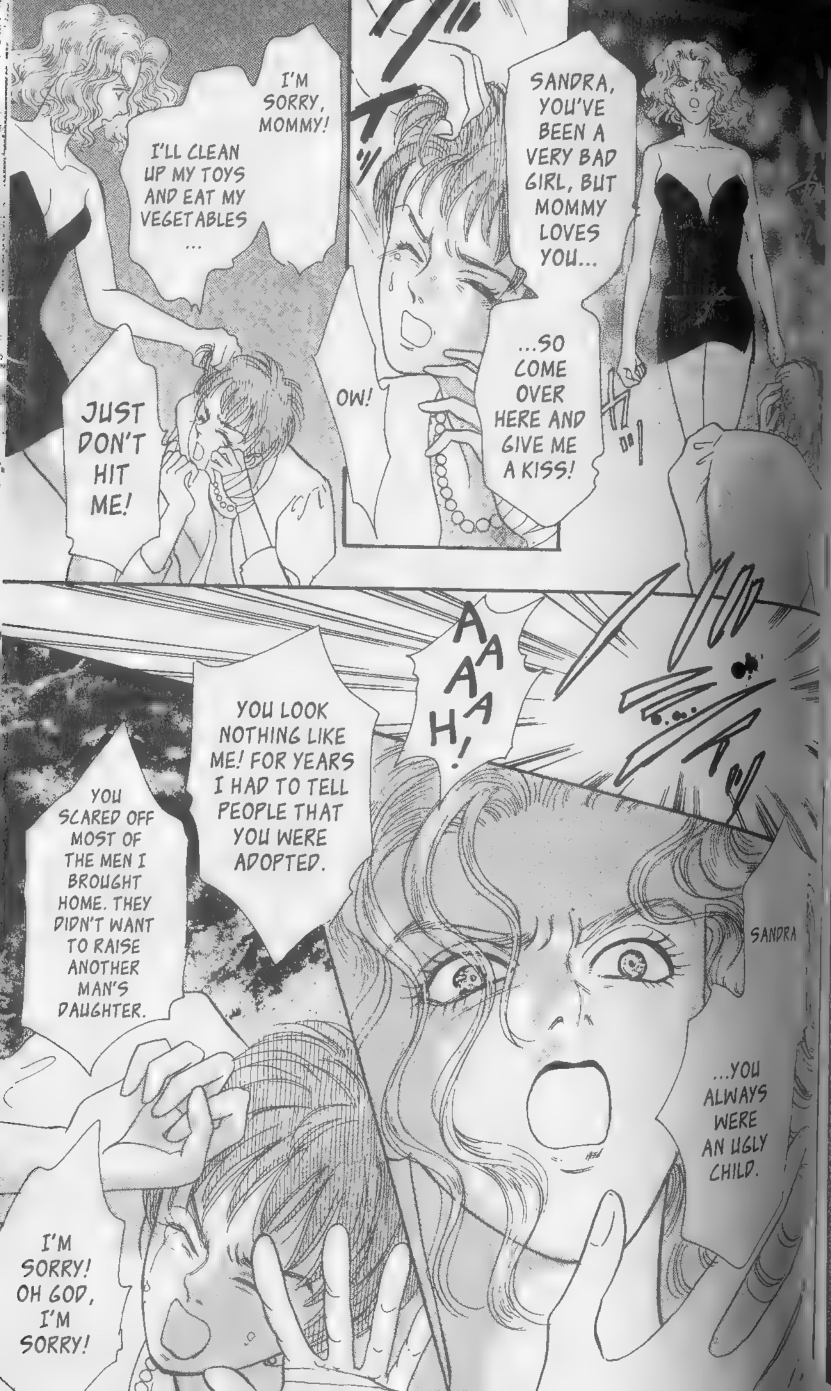

I WAS HOPING I COULD GET A NEW PET...FOR JULIA. I KNOW THIS LOOKS TERRIBLE...
...BUT PLEASE...
...I MUST HAVE A NEW PET.
I'LL...PAY WHATEVER YOU FEEL IS FAIR.
PLEASE... THIS ISN'T MY DAUGHTER'S FAULT.
I UNDERSTAND.
I KNOW JUST THE PET. PLEASE, FOLLOW ME.

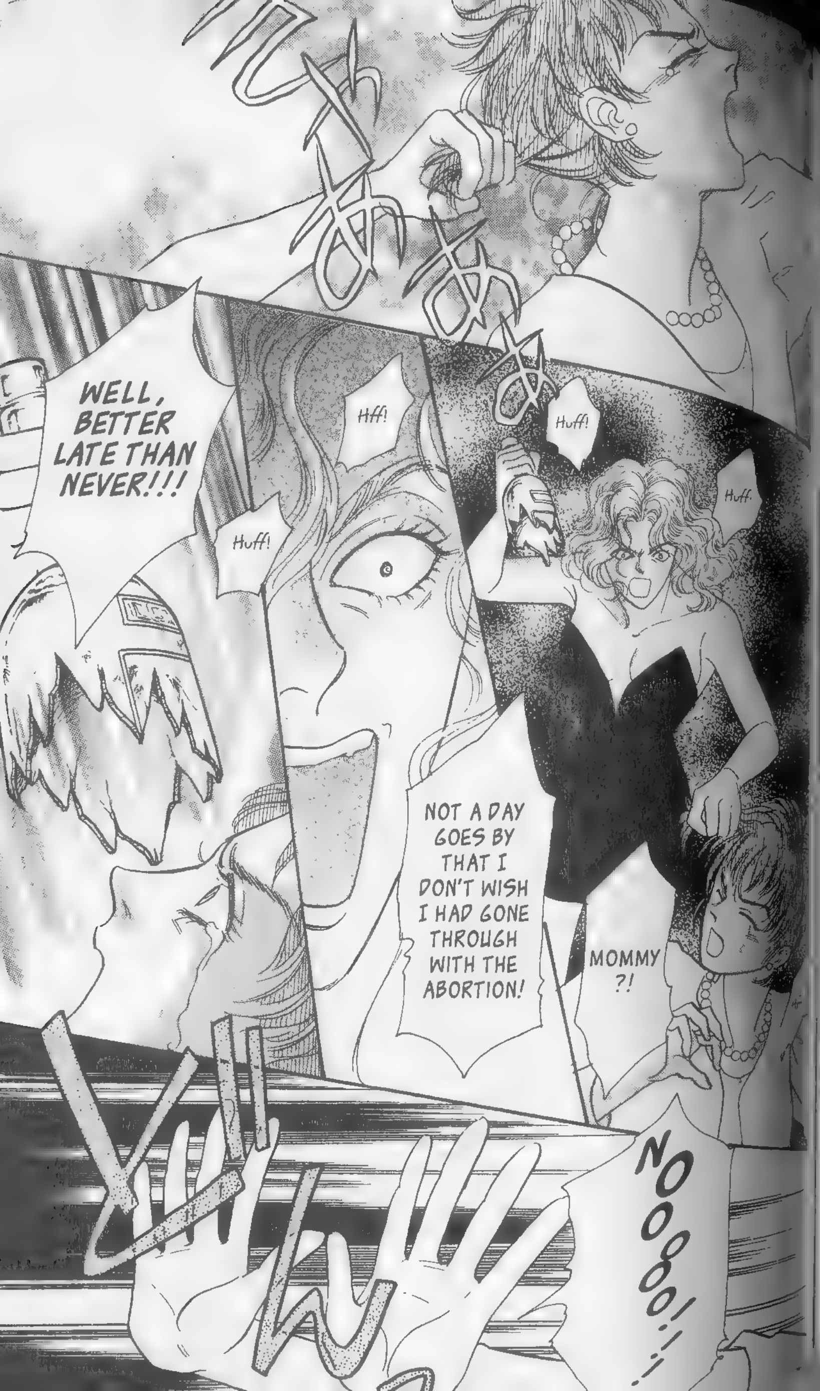

THIS SHOP LOOKS SO SMALL FROM THE OUTSIDE.
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!
WHAT?
IN HERE, PLEASE.
BEHIND THIS DOOR RESTS NOT A PET FOR YOUR DAUGHTER, BUT FOR YOU...

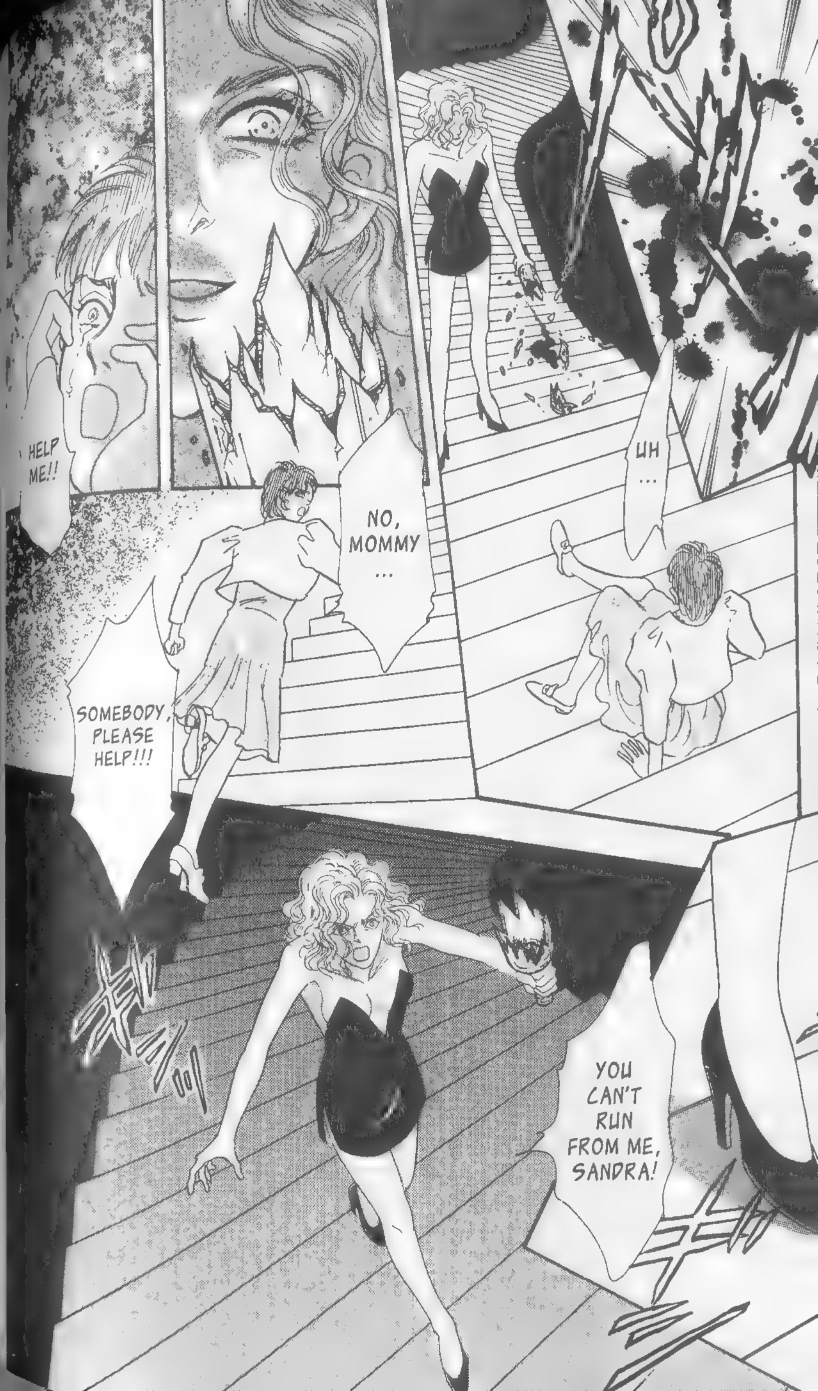

?
BUT IT'S SO DARK IN HERE. I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING.
CLINK
J- JULIA?
HUH!

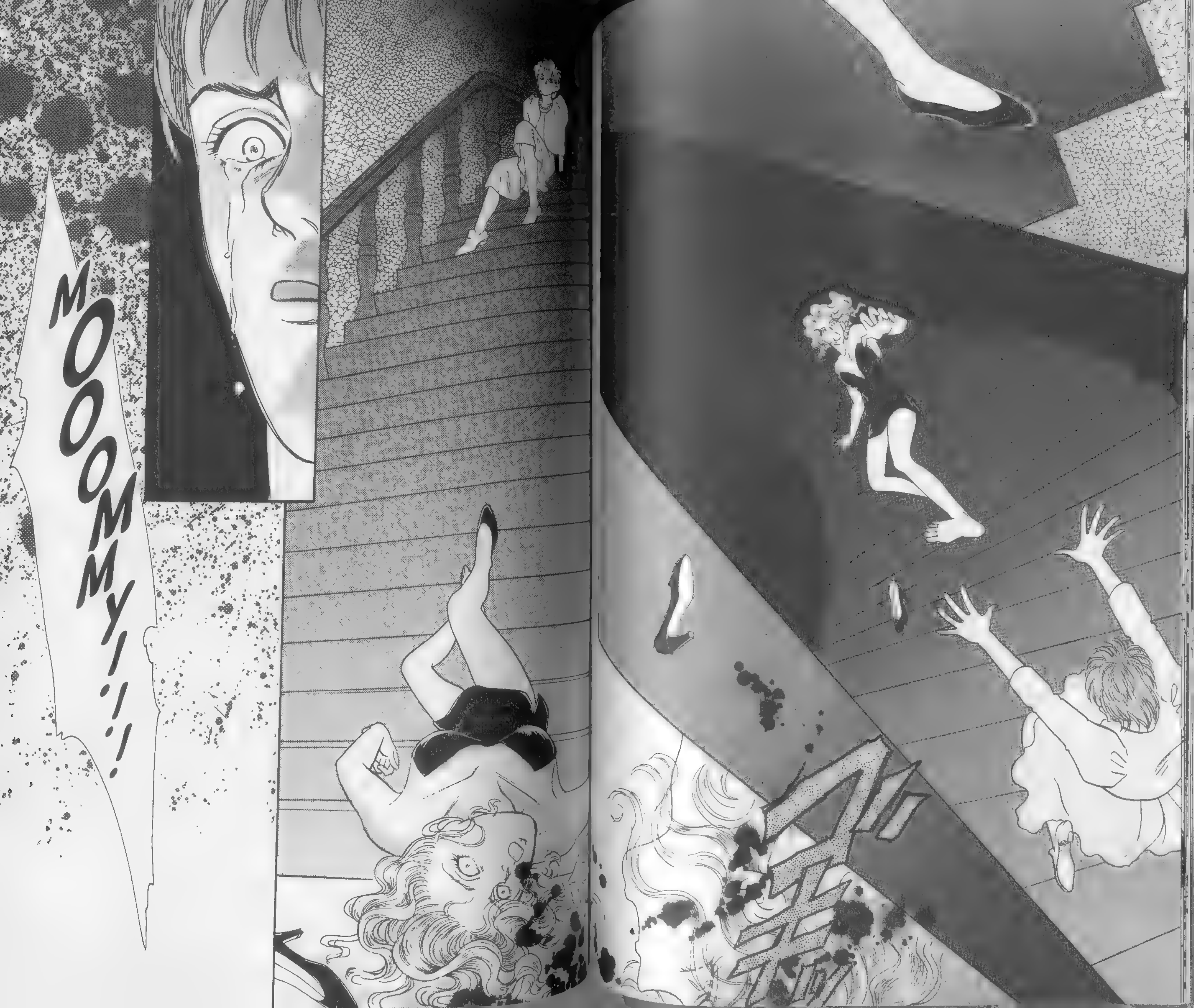

J...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
WHY AREN'T YOU AT SCHOOL?
HUH?
KIDDO, I DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL YEARS AGO.
SO, ARE YOU GONNA GIVE YOUR MOTHER A KISS...
... SANDRA?

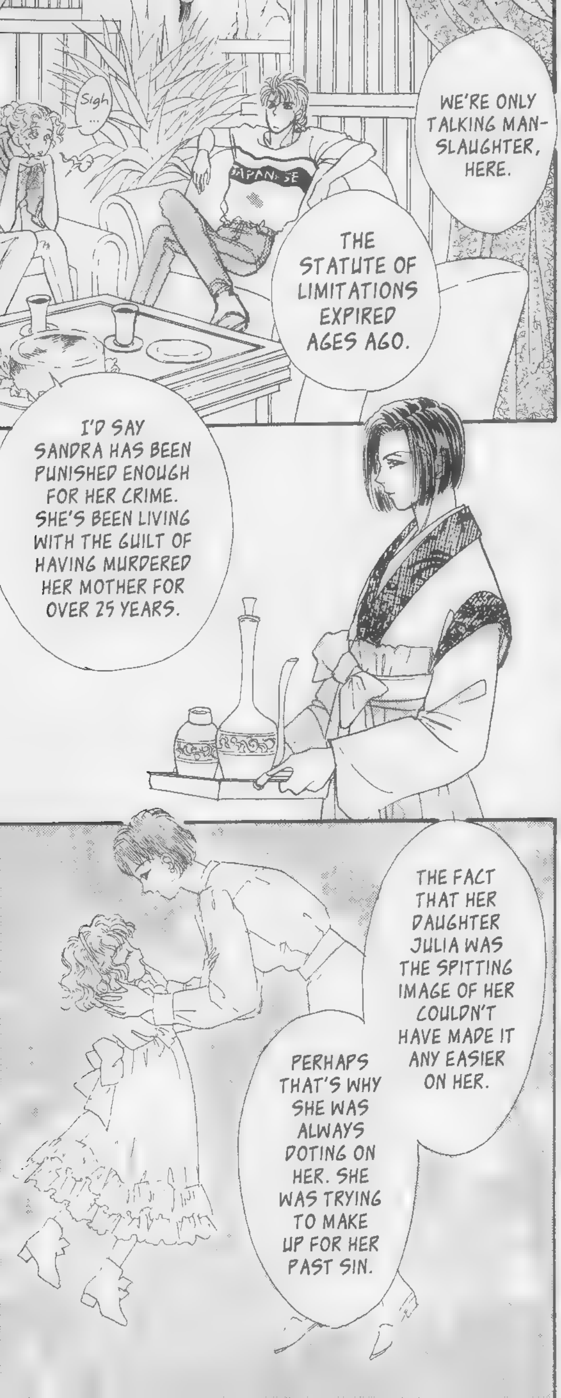

NO...
OH NO, OH NO, OH NO!
I'M SORRY!
I'M SORRY, MOMMY! DON'T HIT ME! OH, GOD! *PLEASE DON'T HIT ME, MOMMY!!*

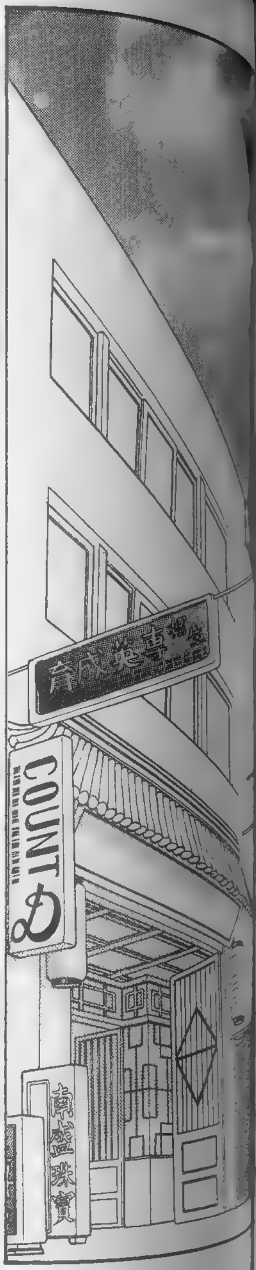

SANDRA, YOU'VE BEEN A VERY BAD GIRL, BUT MOMMY LOVES YOU...
...SO COME OVER HERE AND GIVE ME A KISS!
OW!
I'M SORRY, MOMMY!
I'LL CLEAN UP MY TOYS AND EAT MY VEGETABLES ...
JUST DON'T HIT ME!
AAAAH!
SANDRA
...YOU ALWAYS WERE AN UGLY CHILD.
YOU LOOK NOTHING LIKE ME! FOR YEARS I HAD TO TELL PEOPLE THAT YOU WERE ADOPTED.
YOU SCARED OFF MOST OF THE MEN I BROUGHT HOME. THEY DIDN'T WANT TO RAISE ANOTHER MAN'S DAUGHTER.
I'M SORRY! OH GOD, I'M SORRY!

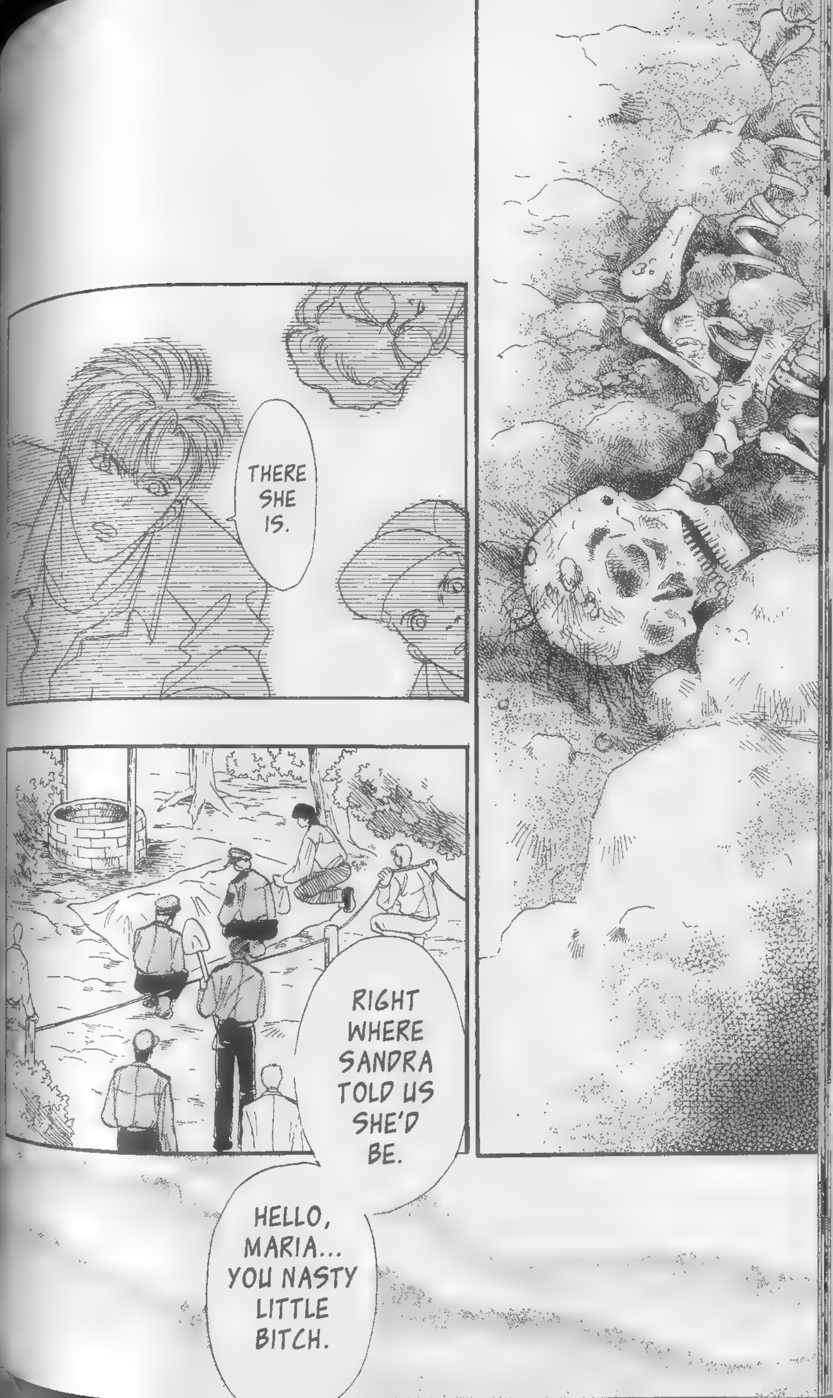

WELL, BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!!!
Huff!
Huff!
Huff!
Huff!
NOT A DAY GOES BY THAT I DON'T WISH I HAD GONE THROUGH WITH THE ABORTION!
MOMMY ?!
NOOOOO!!

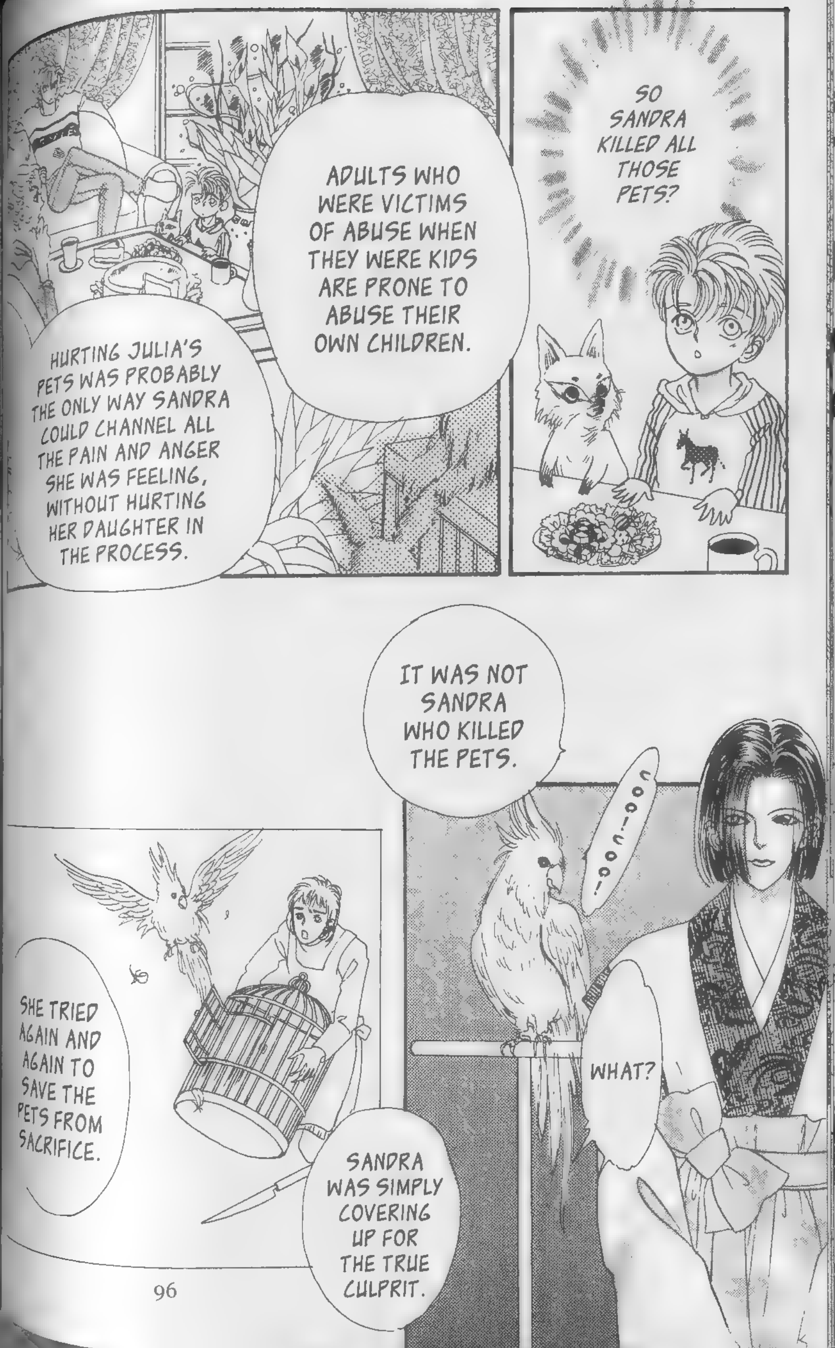

HELP ME!!
NO, MOMMY ...
UH ...
SOMEBODY, PLEASE HELP!!!
YOU CAN'T RUN FROM ME, SANDRA!

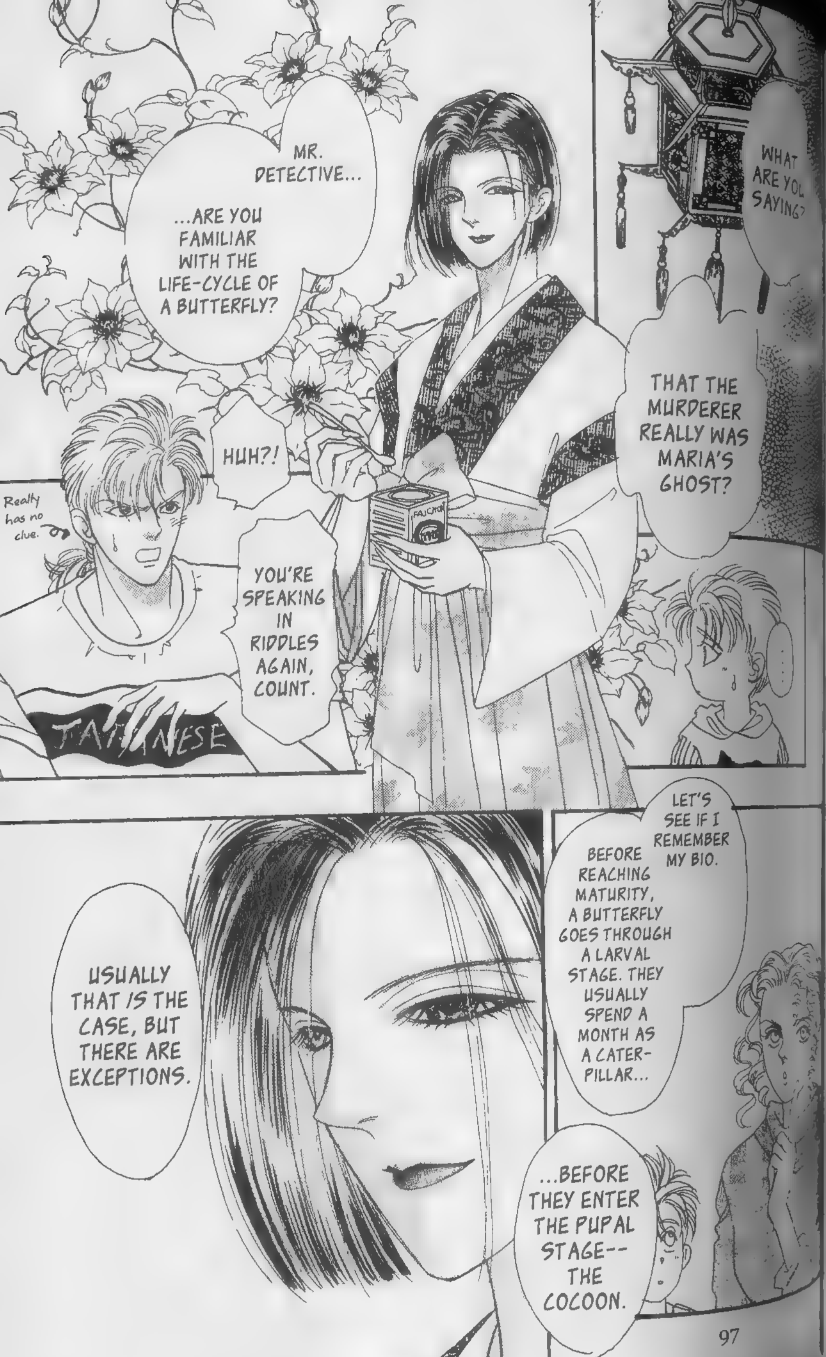

MOOOMMY!!!

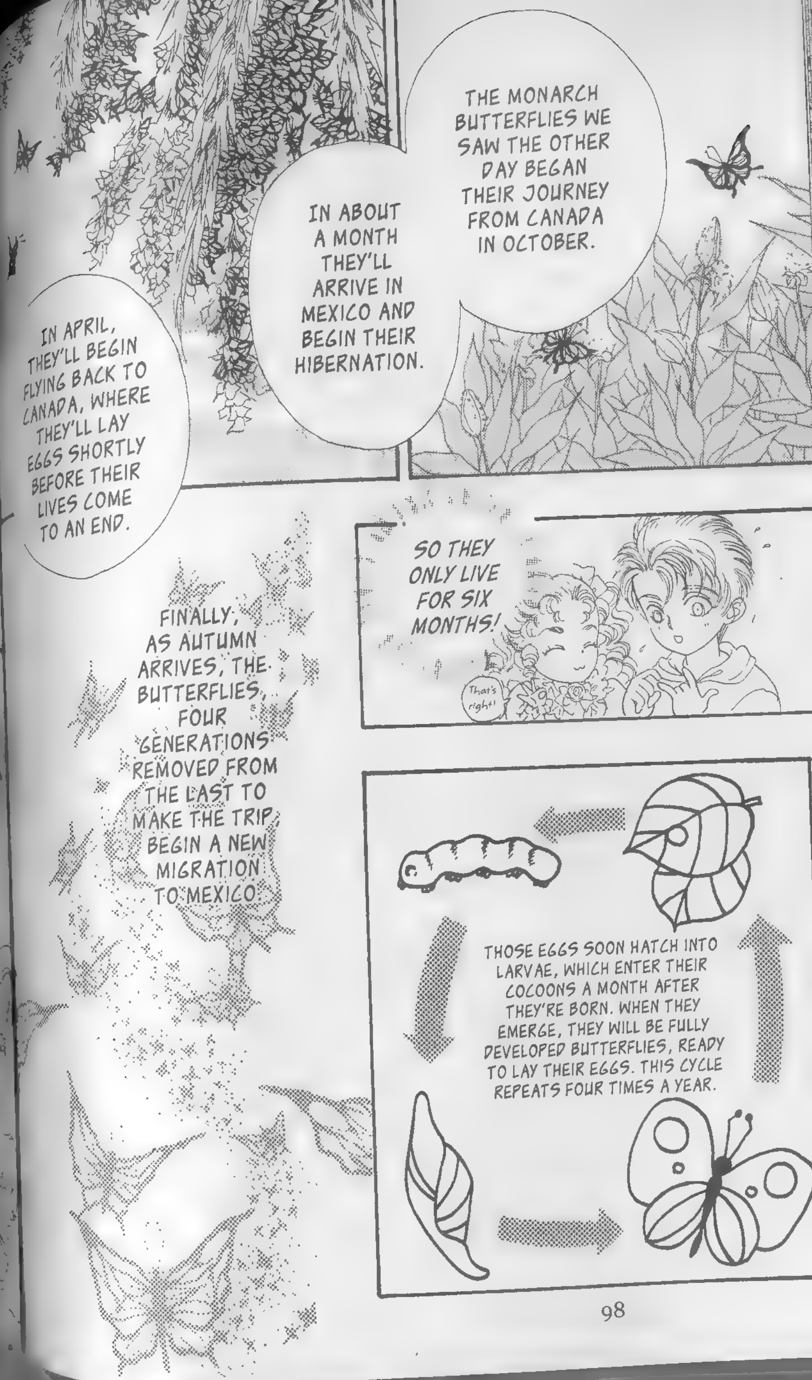

WE'RE ONLY TALKING MAN-SLAUGHTER, HERE.
THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS EXPIRED AGES AGO.
Sigh...
JAPANESE
I'D SAY SANDRA HAS BEEN PUNISHED ENOUGH FOR HER CRIME. SHE'S BEEN LIVING WITH THE GUILT OF HAVING MURDERED HER MOTHER FOR OVER 25 YEARS.
THE FACT THAT HER DAUGHTER JULIA WAS THE SPITTING IMAGE OF HER COULDN'T HAVE MADE IT ANY EASIER ON HER.
PERHAPS THAT'S WHY SHE WAS ALWAYS DOTING ON HER. SHE WAS TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR HER PAST SIN.

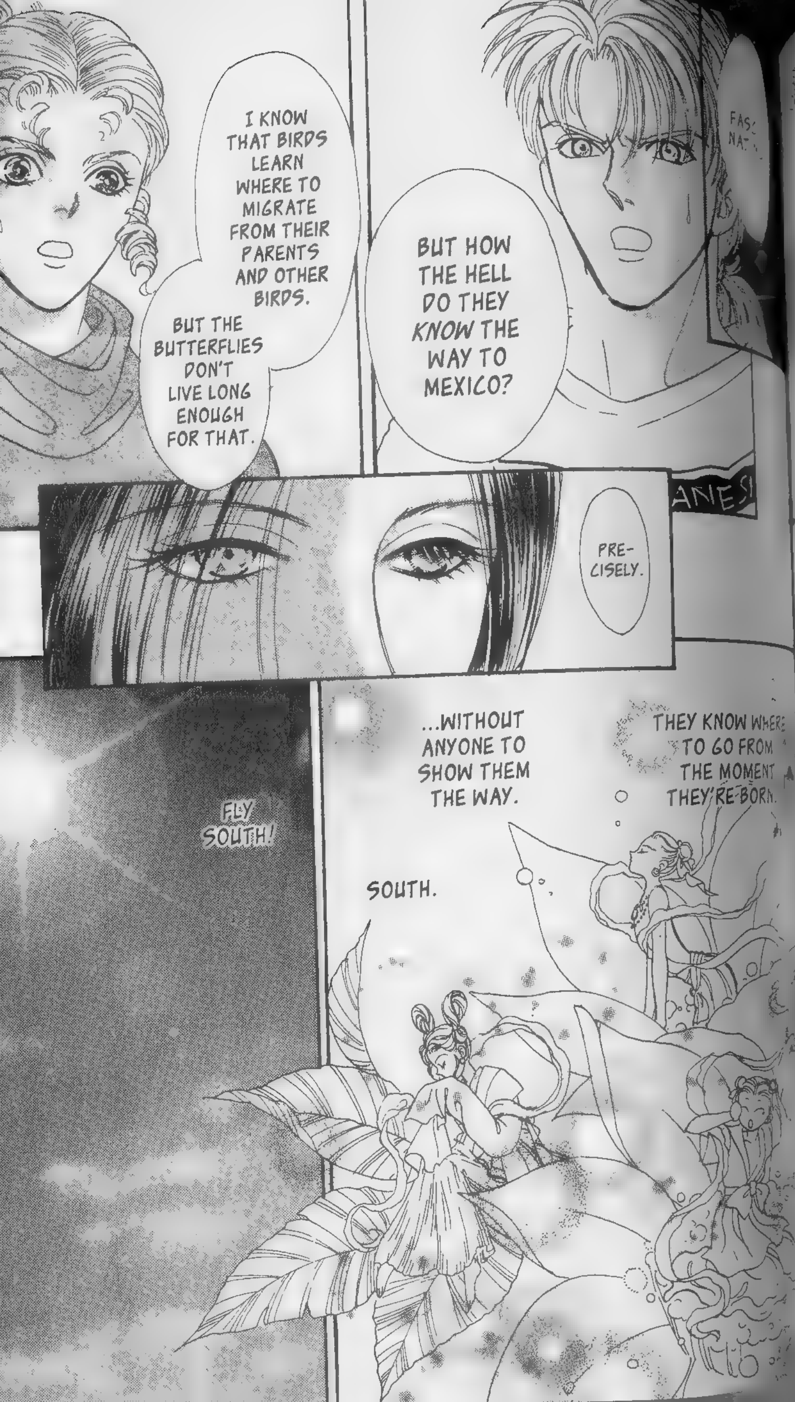

育成英專補習
COUNT D
南盛珠寶

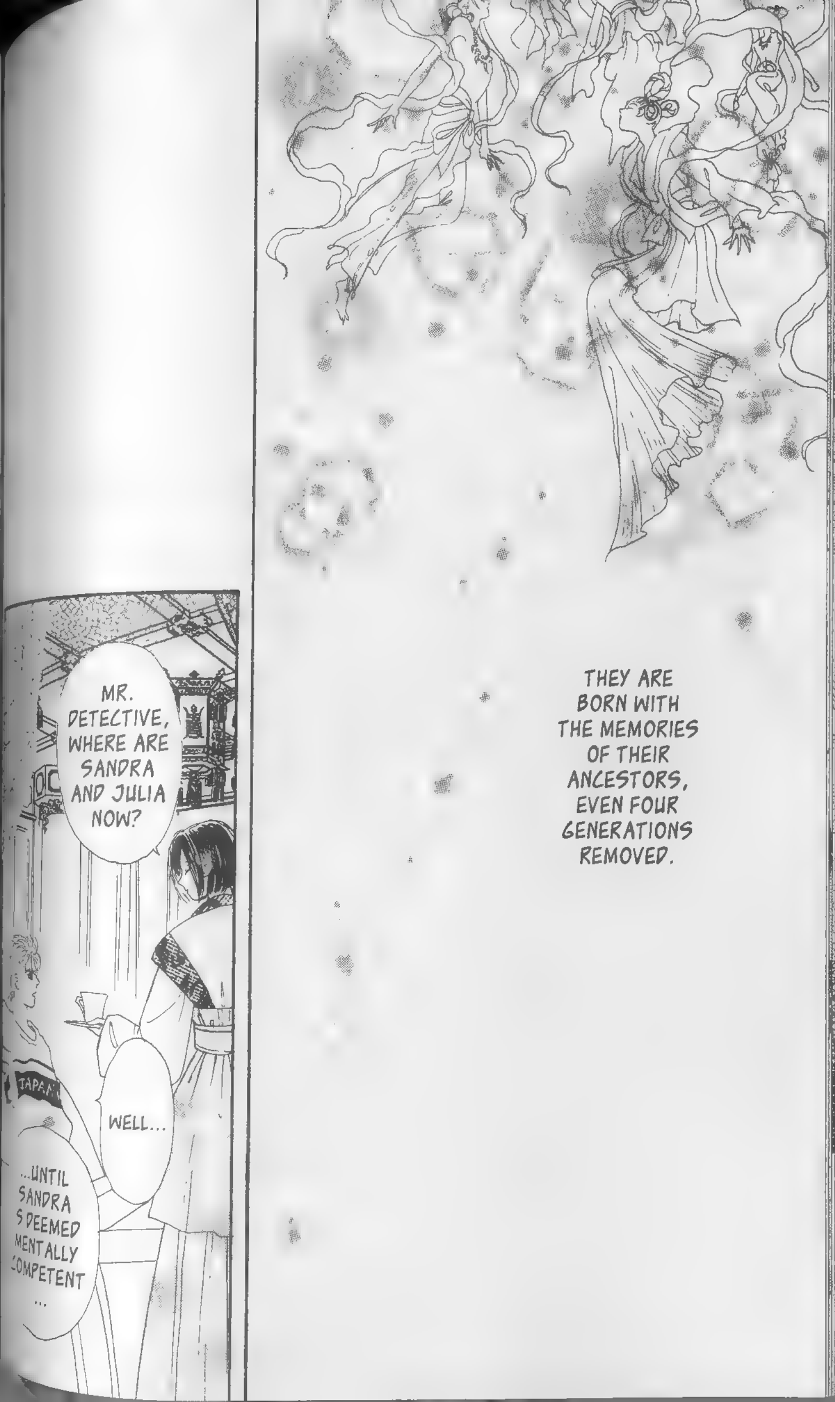

THERE SHE IS.
RIGHT WHERE SANDRA TOLD US SHE'D BE.
HELLO, MARIA... YOU NASTY LITTLE BITCH.

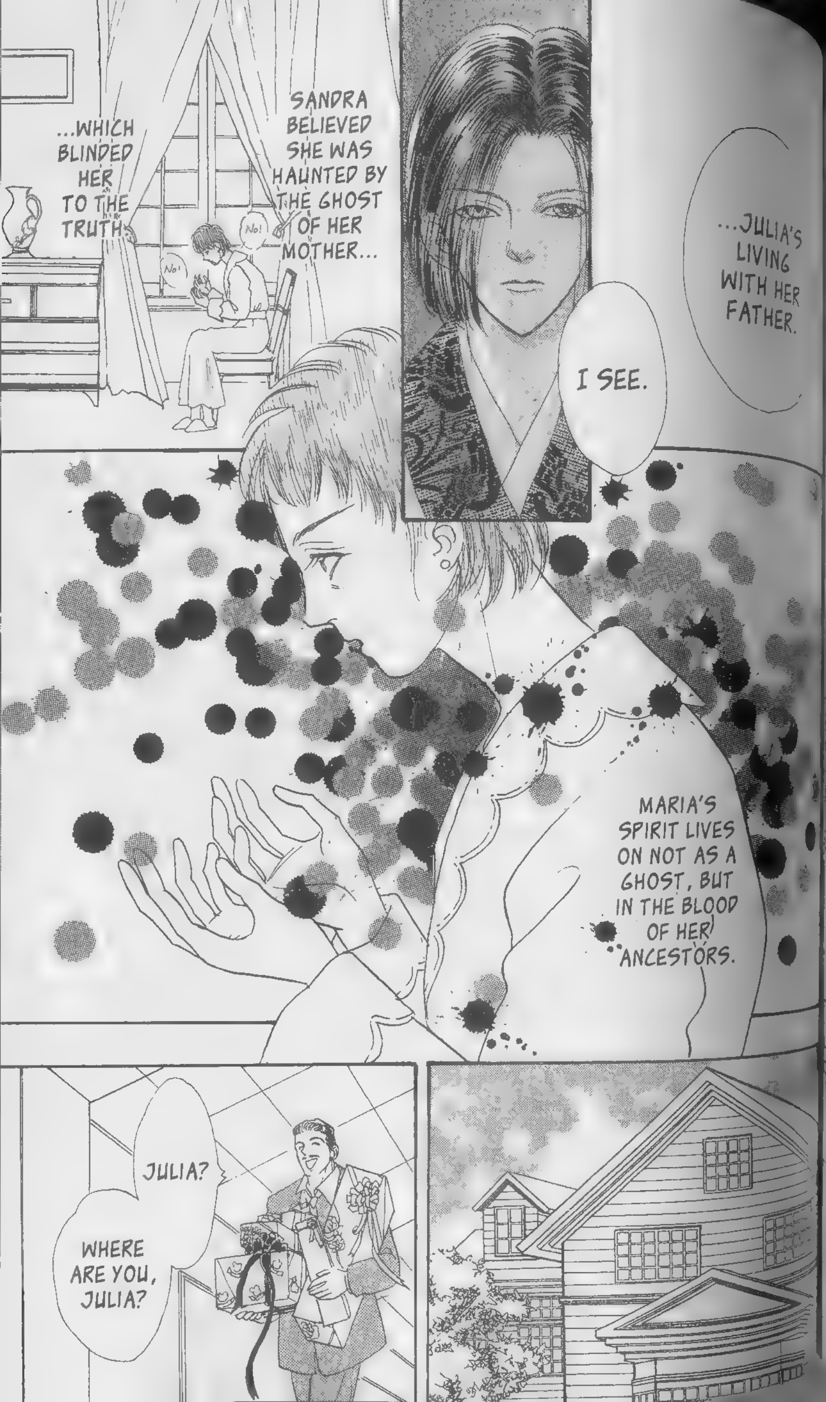

SO SANDRA KILLED ALL THOSE PETS?
ADULTS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF ABUSE WHEN THEY WERE KIDS ARE PRONE TO ABUSE THEIR OWN CHILDREN.
HURTING JULIA'S PETS WAS PROBABLY THE ONLY WAY SANDRA COULD CHANNEL ALL THE PAIN AND ANGER SHE WAS FEELING, WITHOUT HURTING HER DAUGHTER IN THE PROCESS.
IT WAS NOT SANDRA WHO KILLED THE PETS.
COO! COO!
WHAT?
SANDRA WAS SIMPLY COVERING UP FOR THE TRUE CULPRIT.
SHE TRIED AGAIN AND AGAIN TO SAVE THE PETS FROM SACRIFICE.

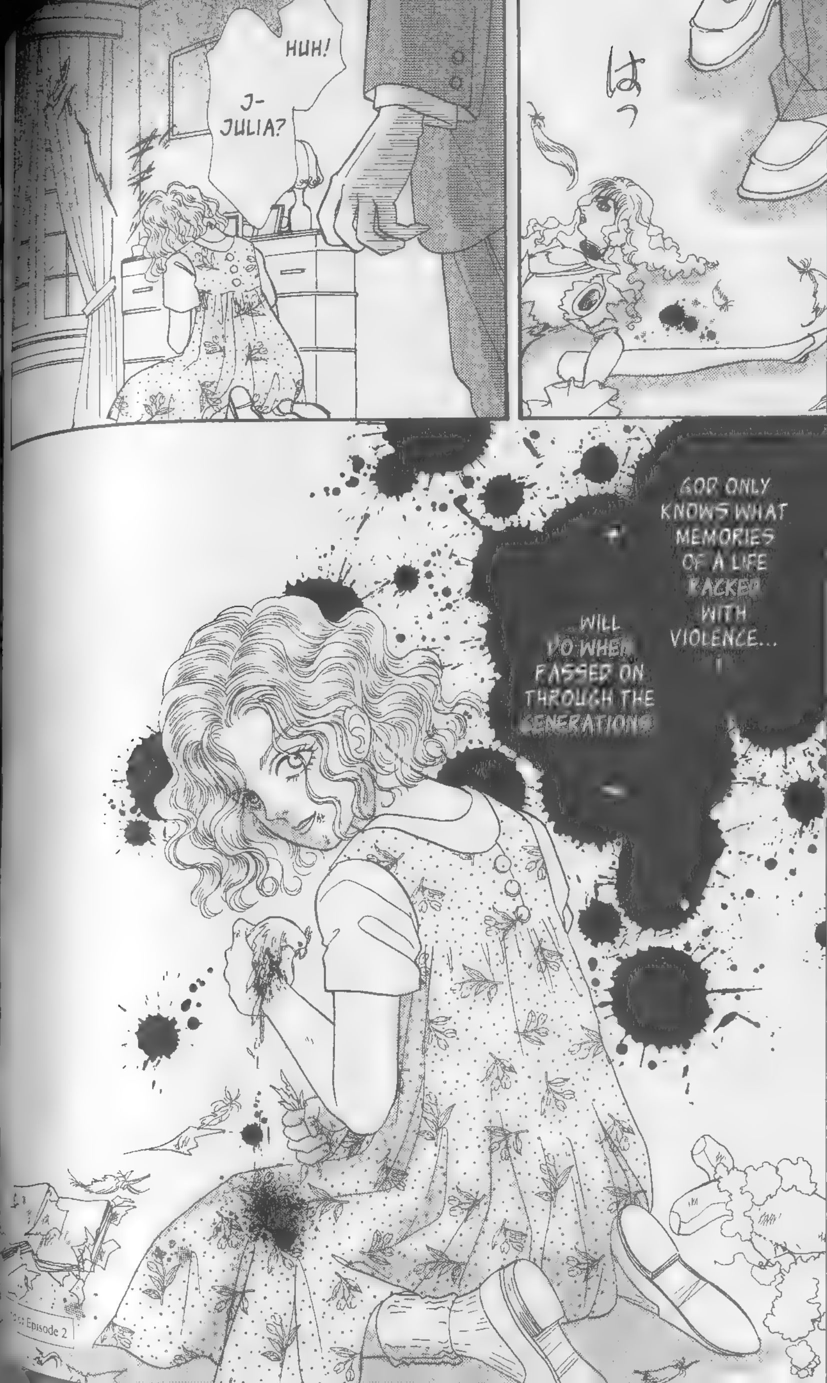

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THAT THE MURDERER REALLY WAS MARIA'S GHOST?
MR. DETECTIVE...
...ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE LIFE-CYCLE OF A BUTTERFLY?
HUH?!
Really has no clue.
YOU'RE SPEAKING IN RIDDLES AGAIN, COUNT.
LET'S SEE IF I REMEMBER MY BIO.
BEFORE REACHING MATURITY, A BUTTERFLY GOES THROUGH A LARVAL STAGE. THEY USUALLY SPEND A MONTH AS A CATERPILLAR...
...BEFORE THEY ENTER THE PUPAL STAGE--THE COCOON.
USUALLY THAT IS THE CASE, BUT THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS.

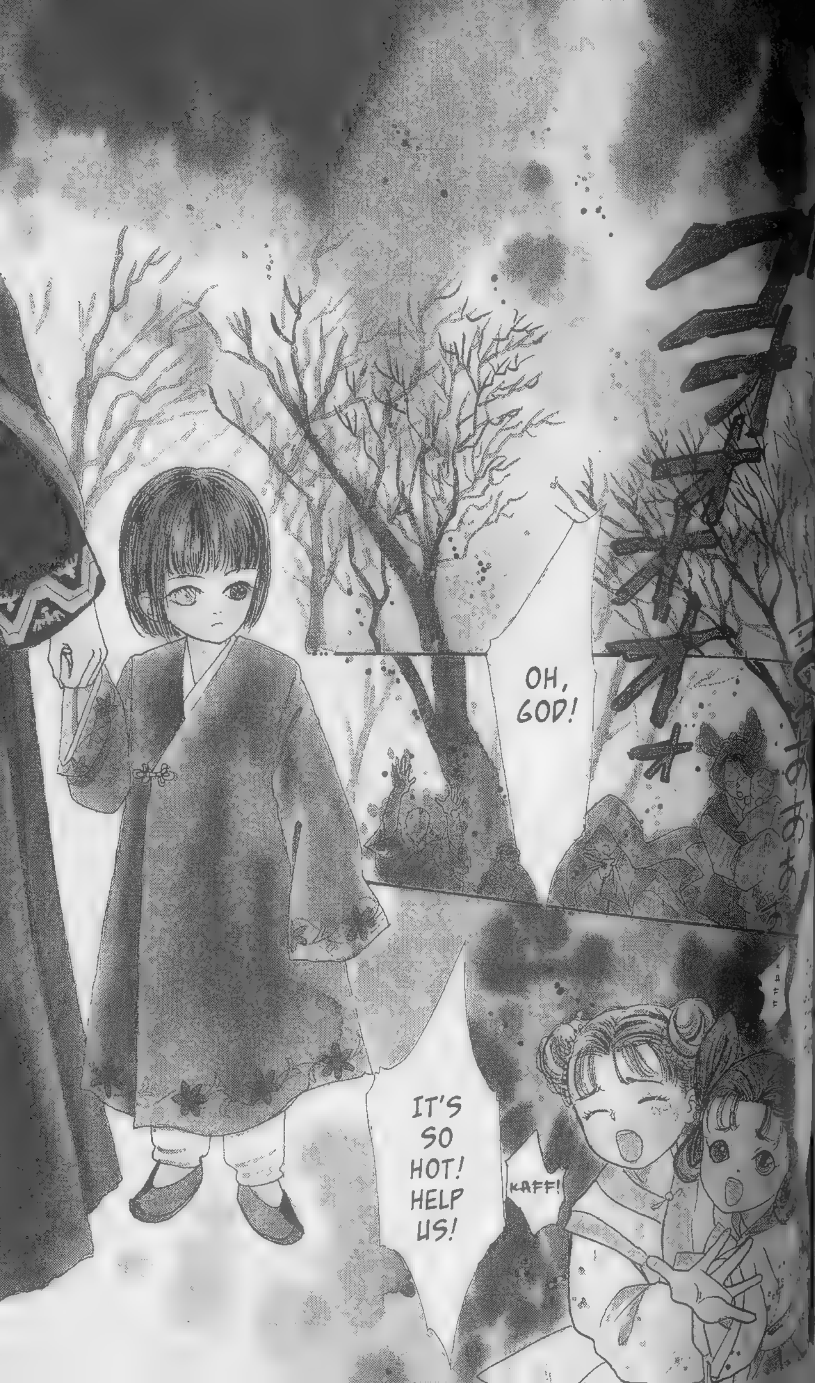

THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES WE SAW THE OTHER DAY BEGAN THEIR JOURNEY FROM CANADA IN OCTOBER.
IN ABOUT A MONTH THEY'LL ARRIVE IN MEXICO AND BEGIN THEIR HIBERNATION.
IN APRIL, THEY'LL BEGIN FLYING BACK TO CANADA, WHERE THEY'LL LAY EGGS SHORTLY BEFORE THEIR LIVES COME TO AN END.
SO THEY ONLY LIVE FOR SIX MONTHS!
That's right!
THOSE EGGS SOON HATCH INTO LARVAE, WHICH ENTER THEIR COCOONS A MONTH AFTER THEY'RE BORN. WHEN THEY EMERGE, THEY WILL BE FULLY DEVELOPED BUTTERFLIES, READY TO LAY THEIR EGGS. THIS CYCLE REPEATS FOUR TIMES A YEAR.
FINALLY, AS AUTUMN ARRIVES, THE BUTTERFLIES, FOUR GENERATIONS REMOVED FROM THE LAST TO MAKE THE TRIP, BEGIN A NEW MIGRATION TO MEXICO.


FAS- NA-
BUT HOW THE HELL DO THEY *KNOW* THE WAY TO MEXICO?
I KNOW THAT BIRDS LEARN WHERE TO MIGRATE FROM THEIR PARENTS AND OTHER BIRDS.
BUT THE BUTTERFLIES DON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH FOR THAT.
ANES!
PRE-CISELY.
THEY KNOW WHERE TO GO FROM THE MOMENT THEY'RE BORN.
...WITHOUT ANYONE TO SHOW THEM THE WAY.
SOUTH.
FLY SOUTH!

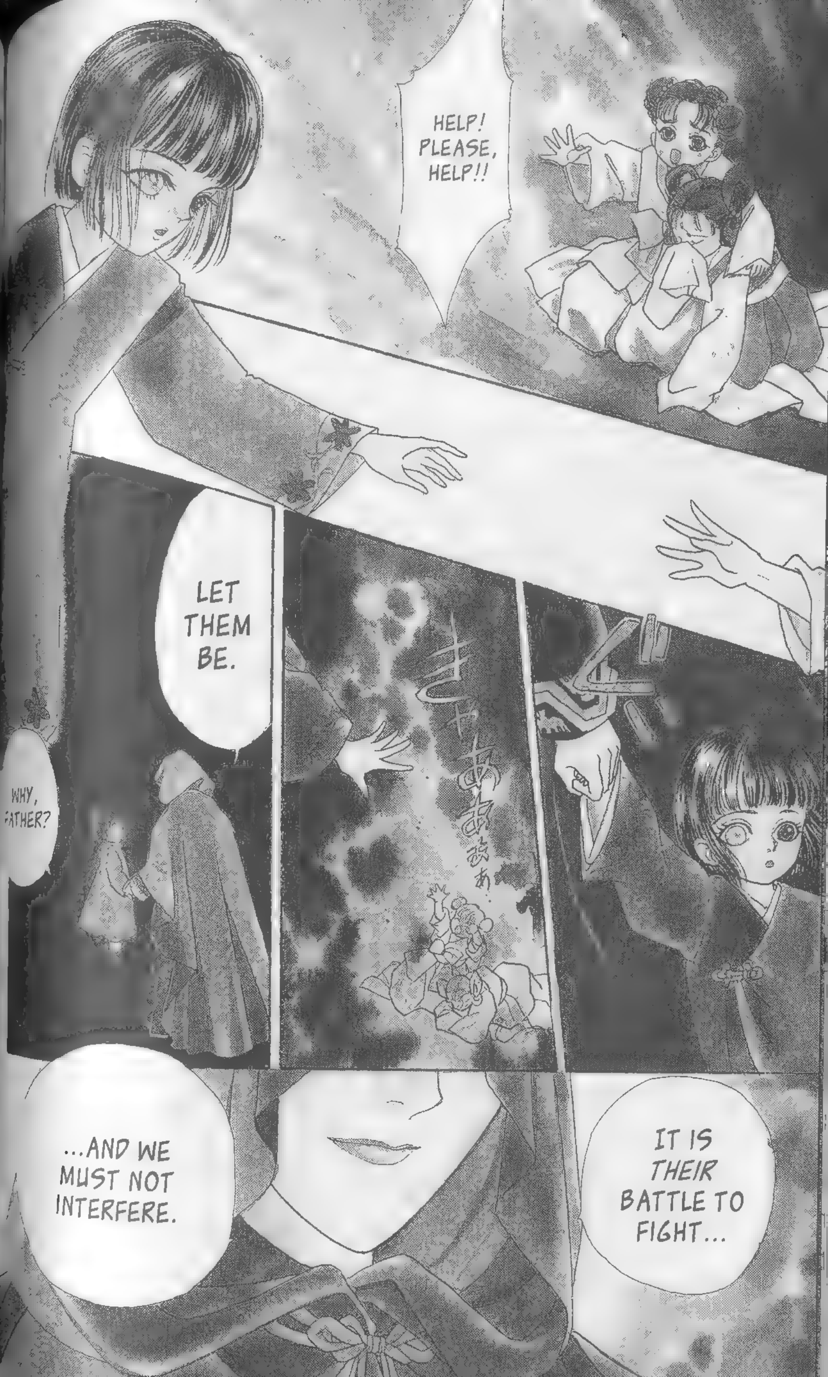

THEY ARE BORN WITH THE MEMORIES OF THEIR ANCESTORS, EVEN FOUR GENERATIONS REMOVED.
MR. DETECTIVE, WHERE ARE SANDRA AND JULIA NOW?
WELL...
...UNTIL SANDRA S DEEMED MENTALLY COMPETENT ...
JAPAN

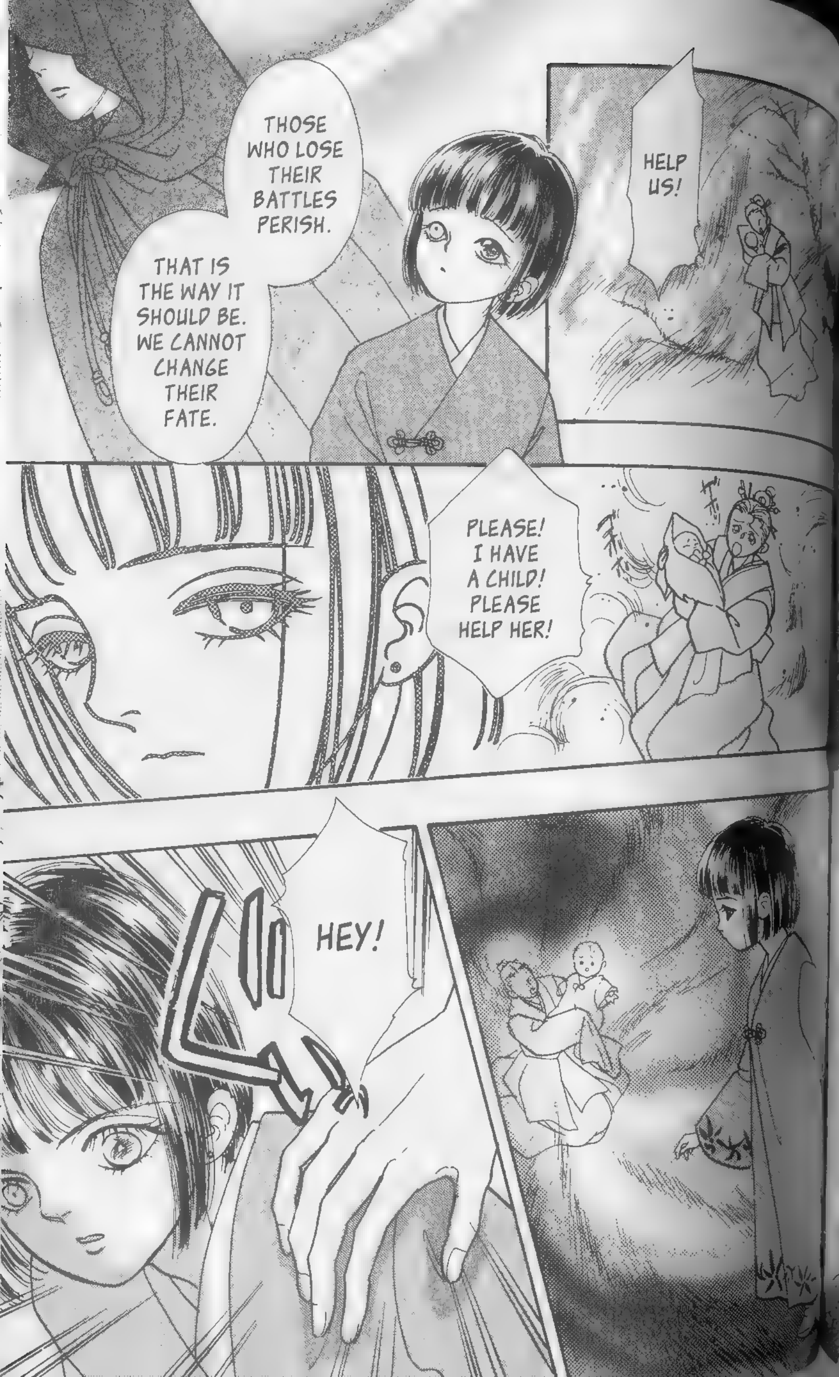

...JULIA'S LIVING WITH HER FATHER.
I SEE.
SANDRA BELIEVED SHE WAS HAUNTED BY THE GHOST OF HER MOTHER...
...WHICH BLINDED HER TO THE TRUTH.
No!
No!
MARIA'S SPIRIT LIVES ON NOT AS A GHOST, BUT IN THE BLOOD OF HER ANCESTORS.
JULIA?
WHERE ARE YOU, JULIA?

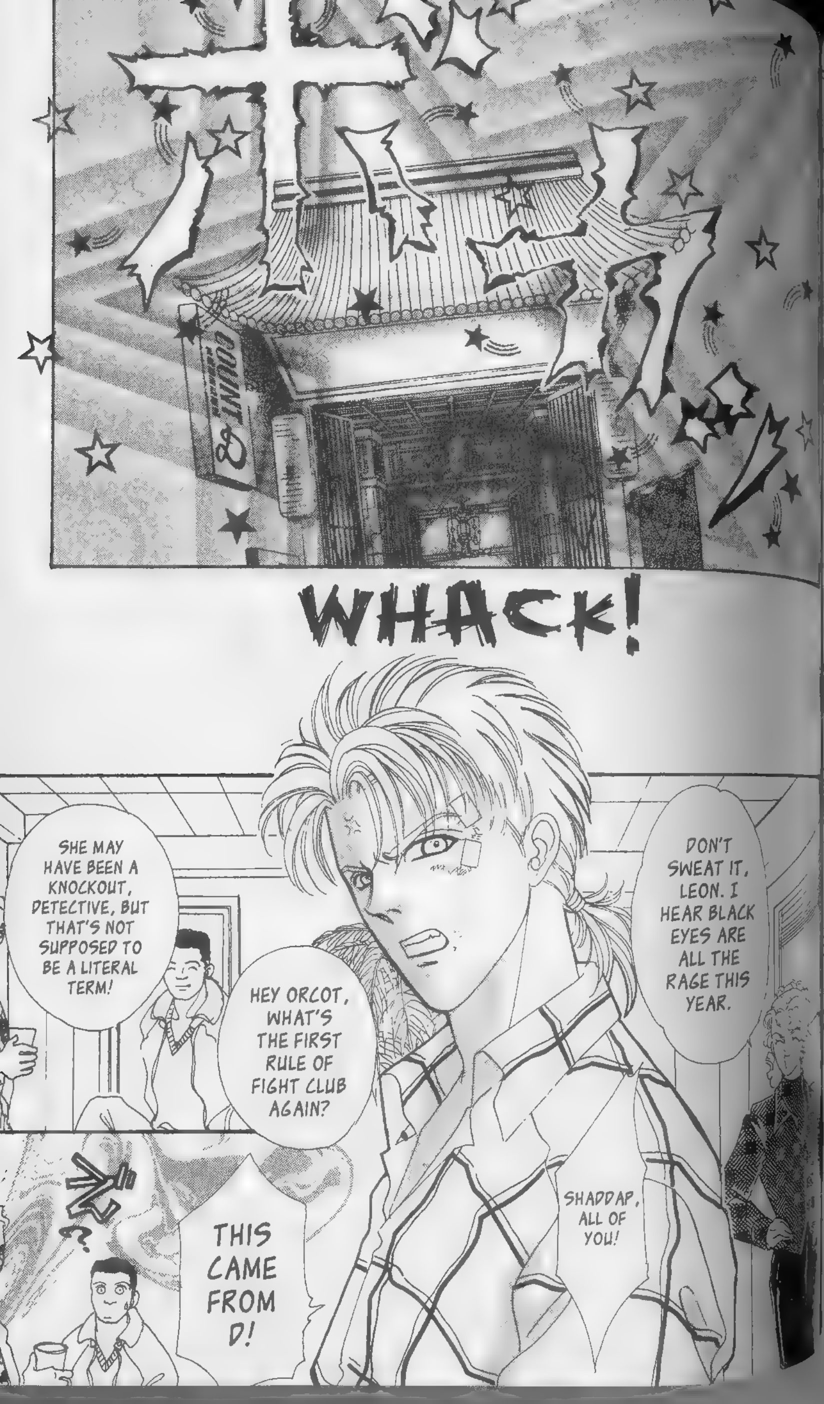

HUH!
J-JULIA?
はっ
GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT MEMORIES OF A LIFE RACKED WITH VIOLENCE...
WILL DO WHEN PASSED ON THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

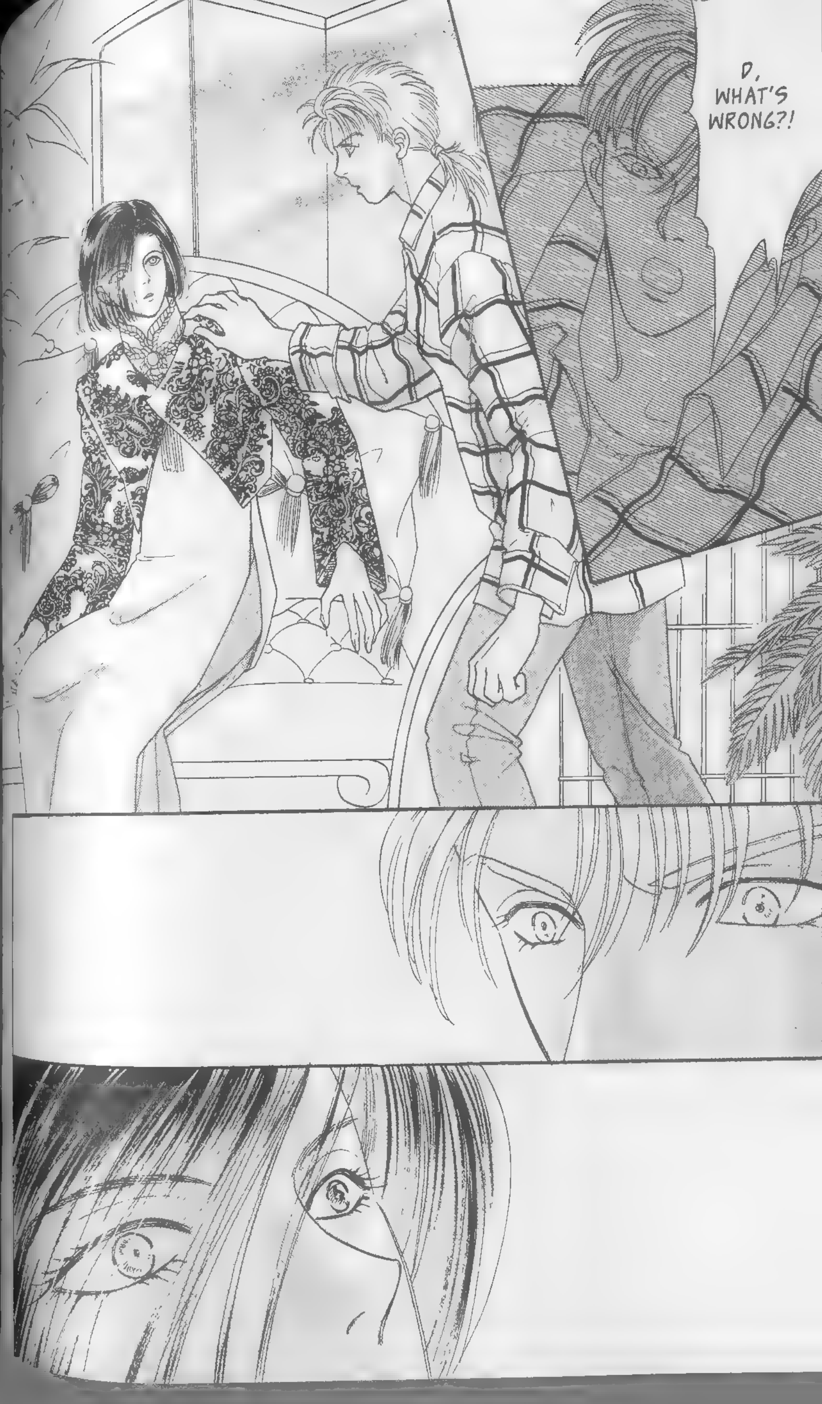

ああああ
OH, GOD!
IT'S SO HOT! HELP US!
KAFF!

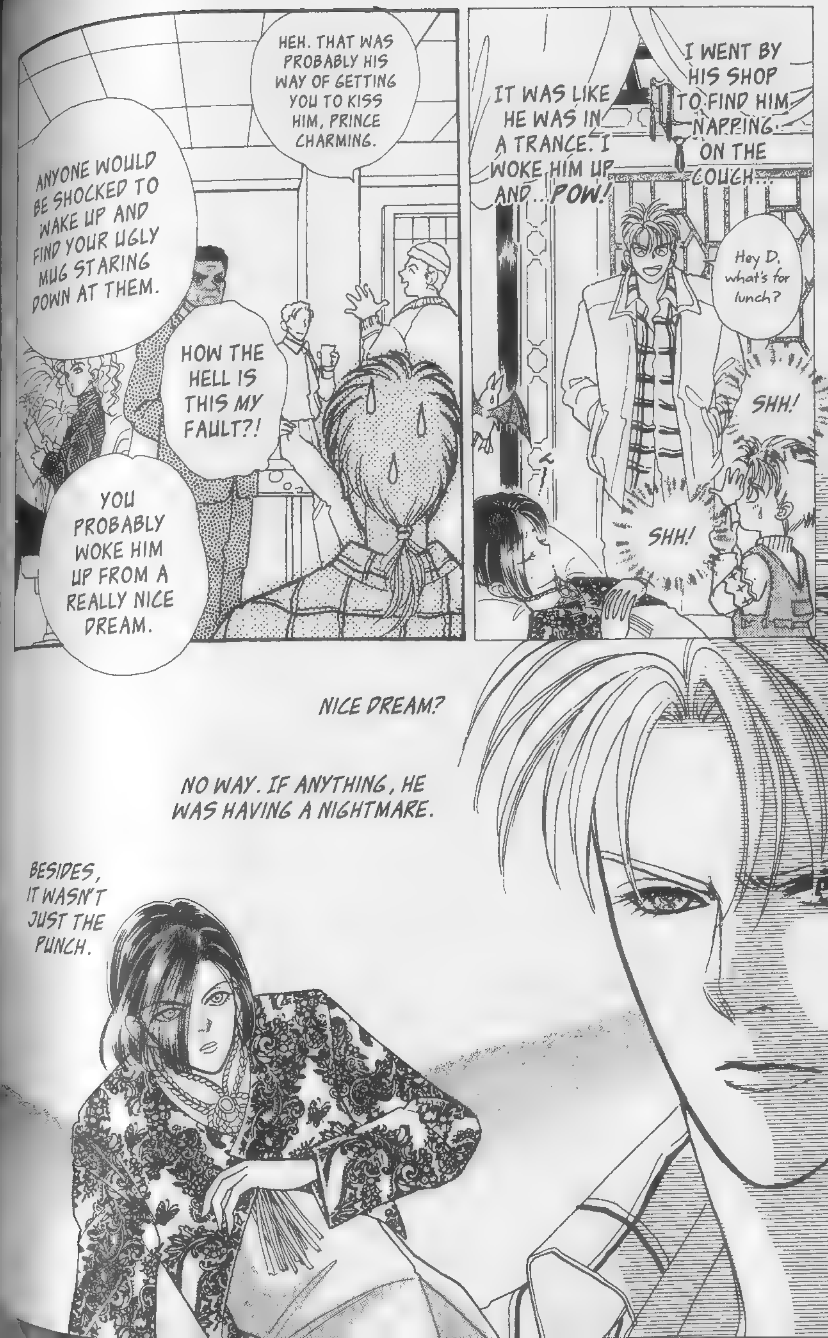
第3話／Desperation

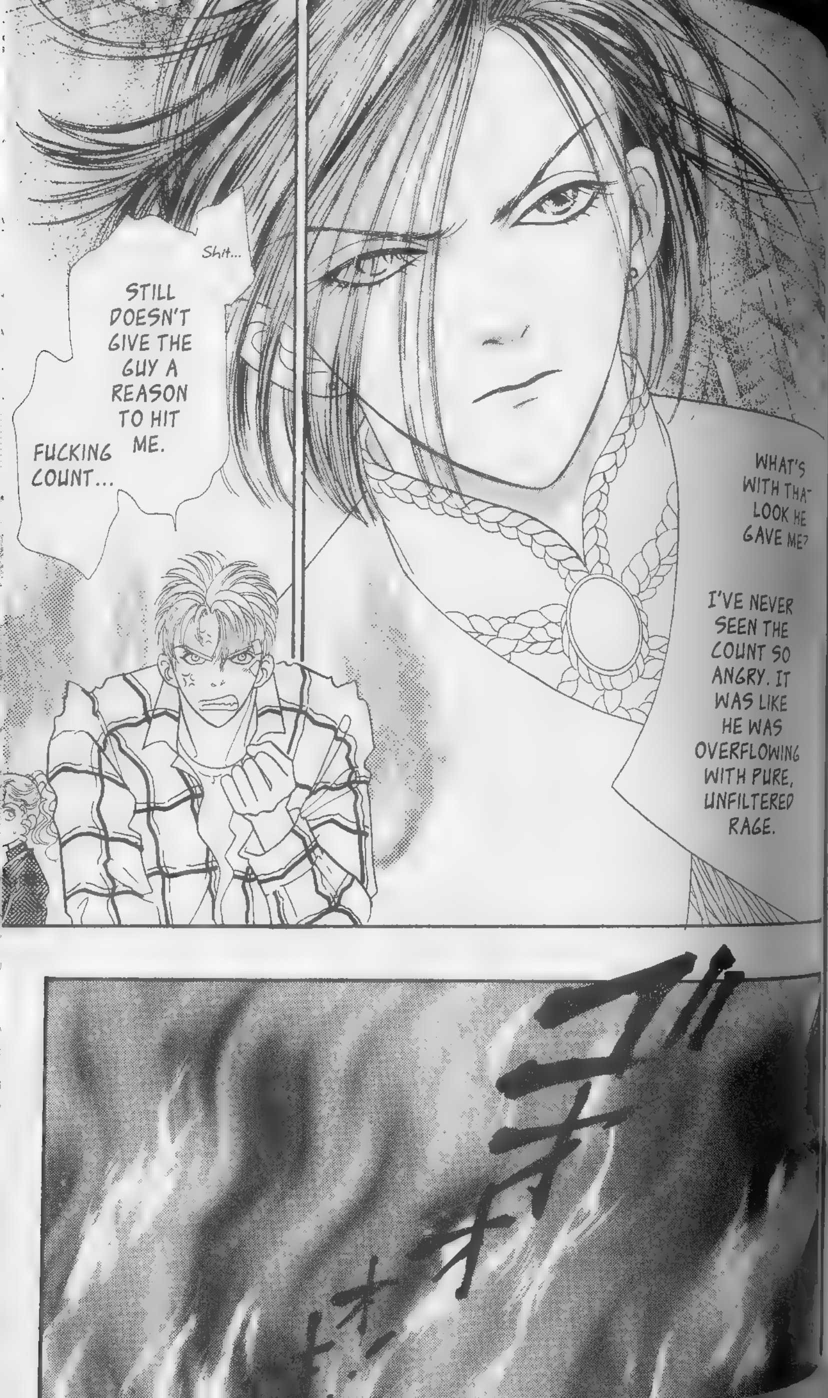

HELP! PLEASE, HELP!!
LET THEM BE.
WHY, FATHER?
IT IS *THEIR* BATTLE TO FIGHT...
...AND WE MUST NOT INTERFERE.

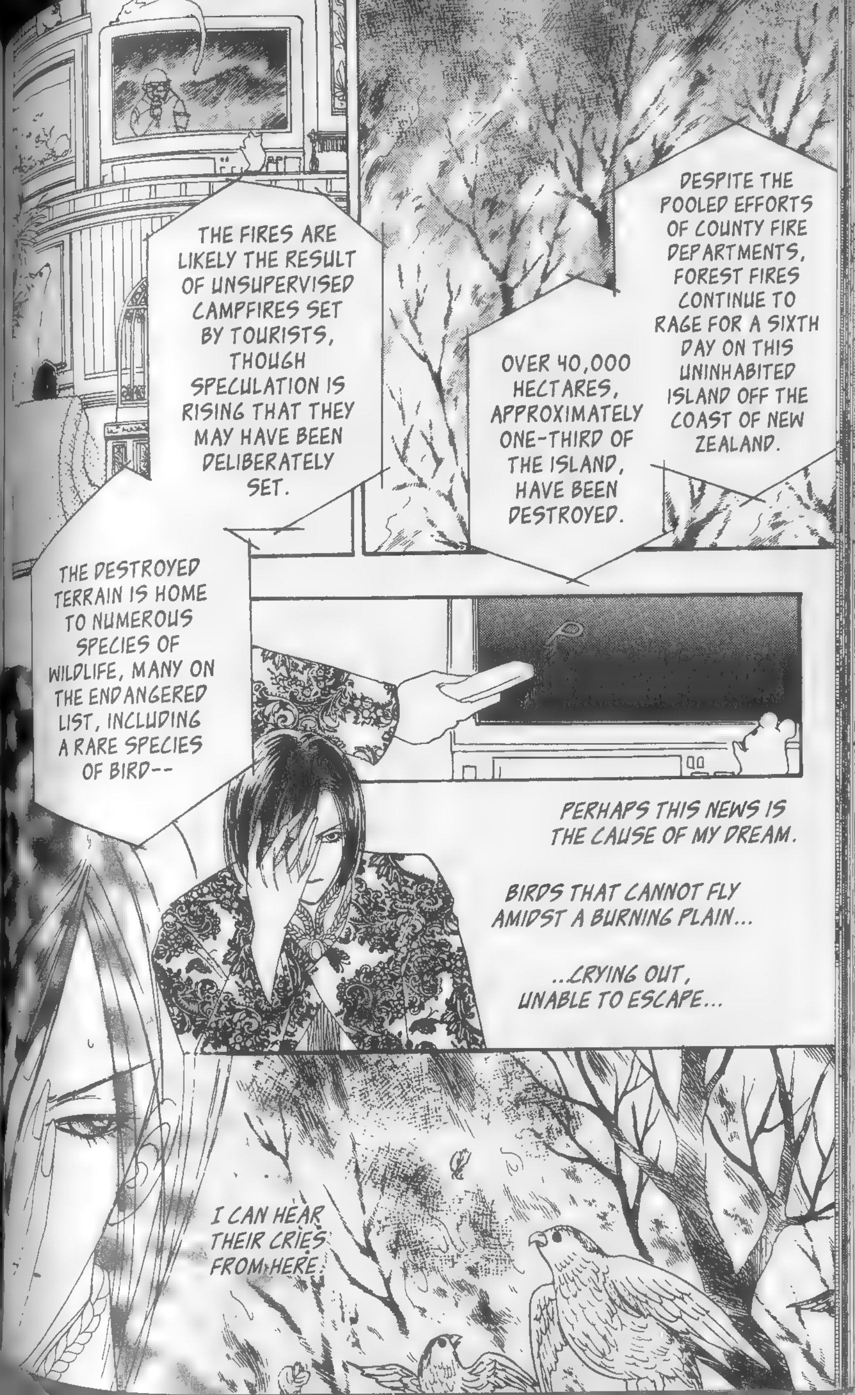

HELP US!
THOSE WHO LOSE THEIR BATTLES PERISH.
THAT IS THE WAY IT SHOULD BE. WE CANNOT CHANGE THEIR FATE.
PLEASE! I HAVE A CHILD! PLEASE HELP HER!
HEY!

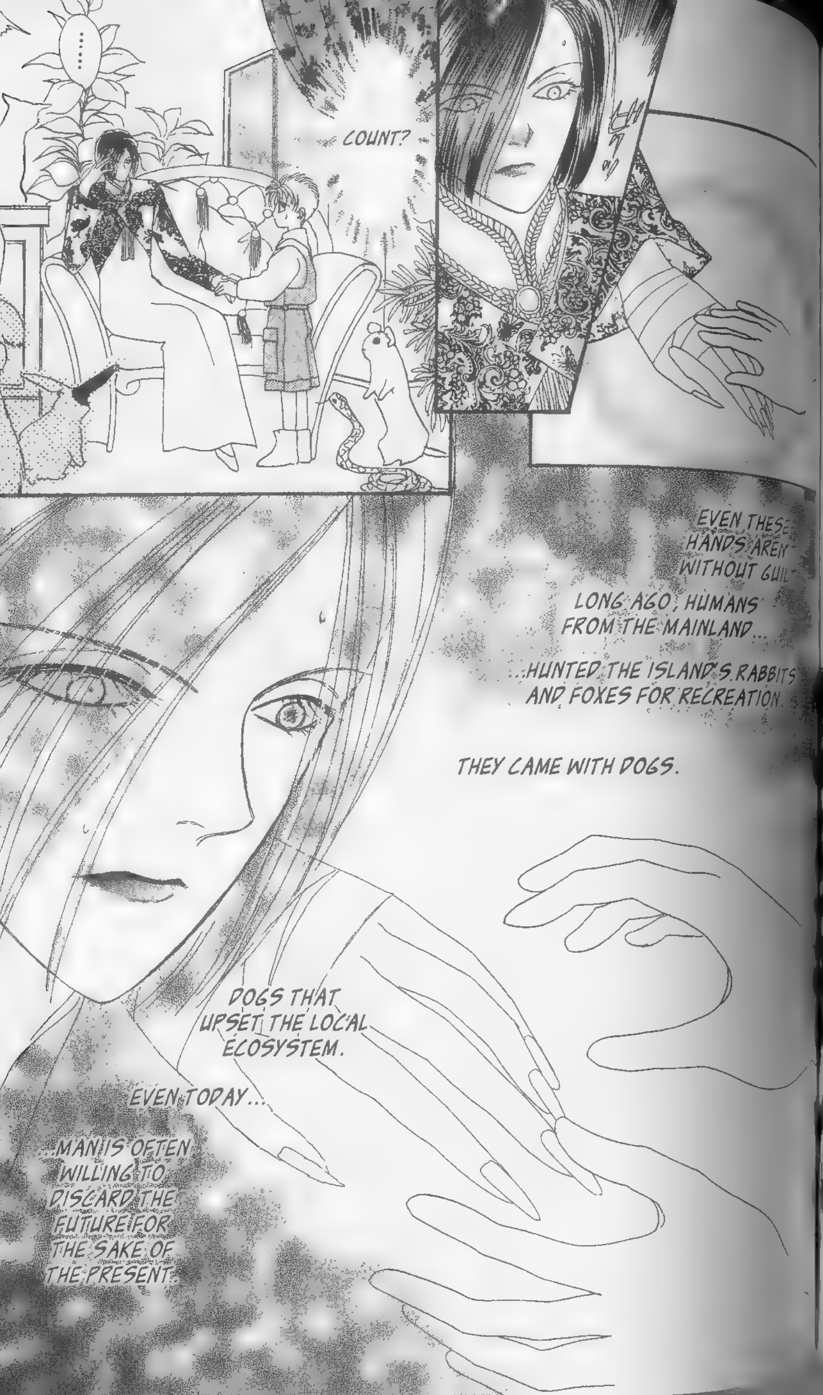

COUNT D
WHACK!
SHE MAY HAVE BEEN A KNOCKOUT, DETECTIVE, BUT THAT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE A LITERAL TERM!
HEY ORCOT, WHAT'S THE FIRST RULE OF FIGHT CLUB AGAIN?
DON'T SWEAT IT, LEON. I HEAR BLACK EYES ARE ALL THE RAGE THIS YEAR.
THIS CAME FROM D!
SHADDAP, ALL OF YOU!

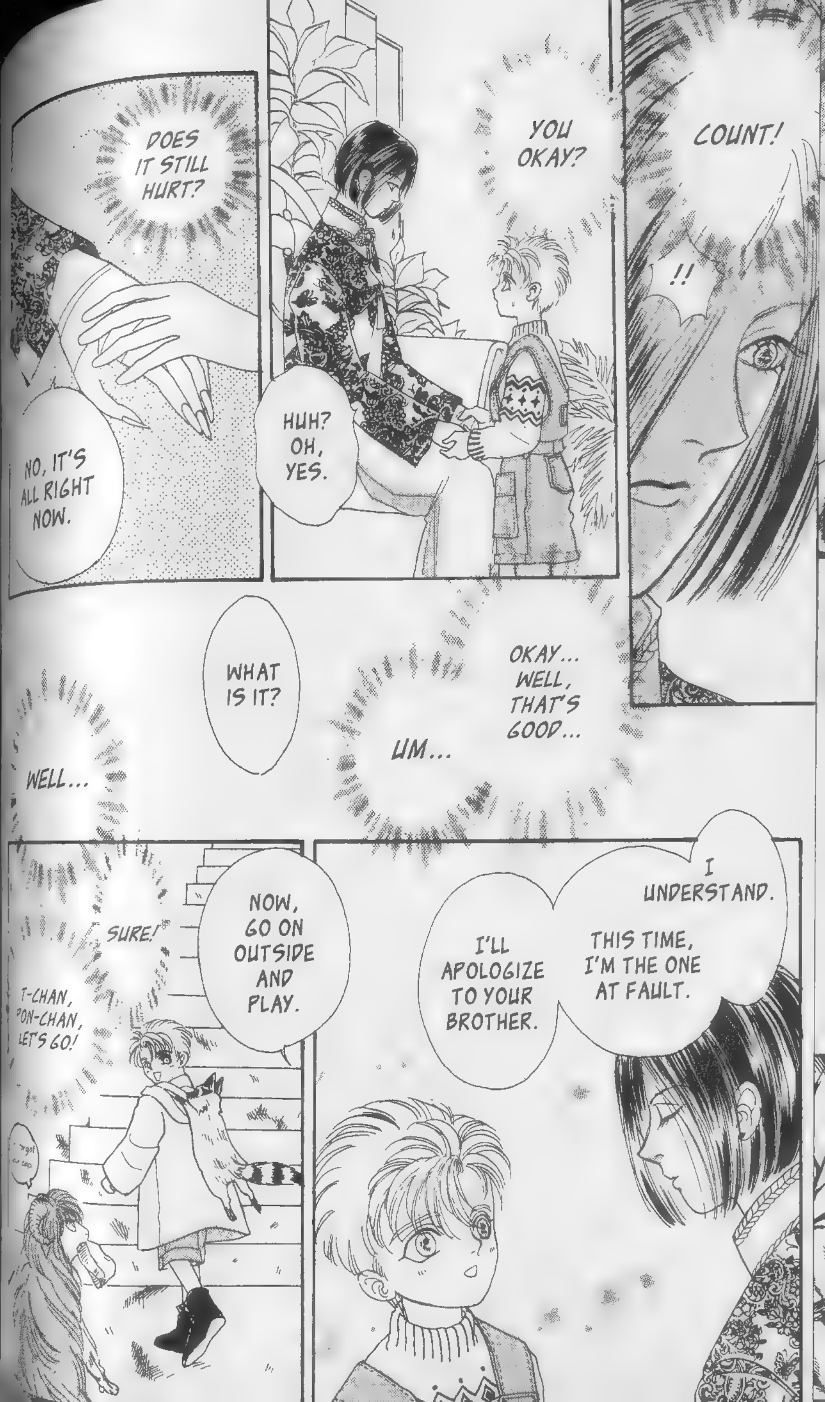

D, WHAT'S WRONG?!

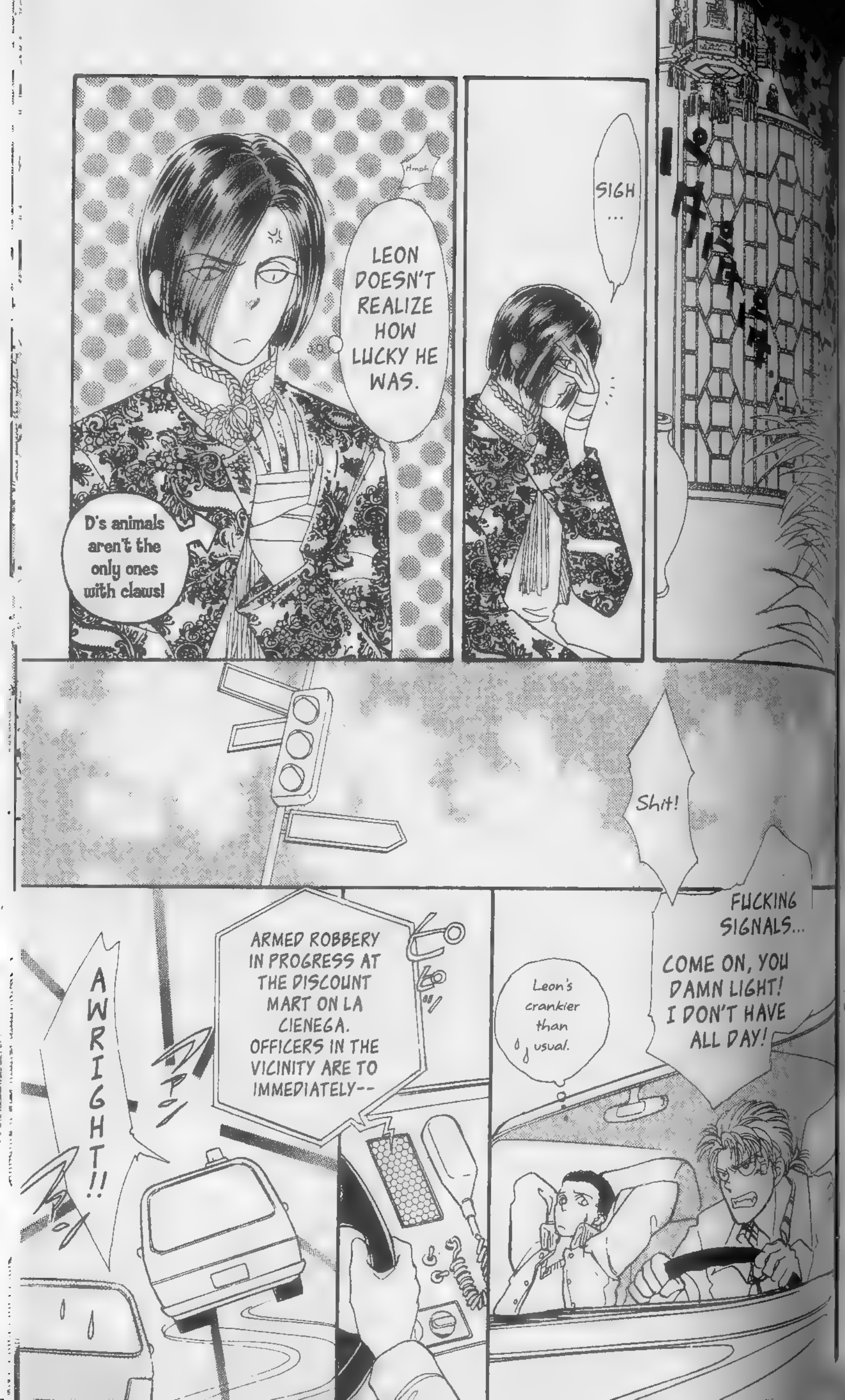

I WENT BY HIS SHOP TO FIND HIM NAPPING ON THE COUCH.
IT WAS LIKE HE WAS IN A TRANCE. I WOKE HIM UP AND... POW!
Hey D, what's for lunch?
SHH!
SHH!
HEH. THAT WAS PROBABLY HIS WAY OF GETTING YOU TO KISS HIM, PRINCE CHARMING.
ANYONE WOULD BE SHOCKED TO WAKE UP AND FIND YOUR UGLY MUG STARING DOWN AT THEM.
HOW THE HELL IS THIS MY FAULT?!
YOU PROBABLY WOKE HIM UP FROM A REALLY NICE DREAM.
NICE DREAM?
NO WAY. IF ANYTHING, HE WAS HAVING A NIGHTMARE.
BESIDES, IT WASN'T JUST THE PUNCH.

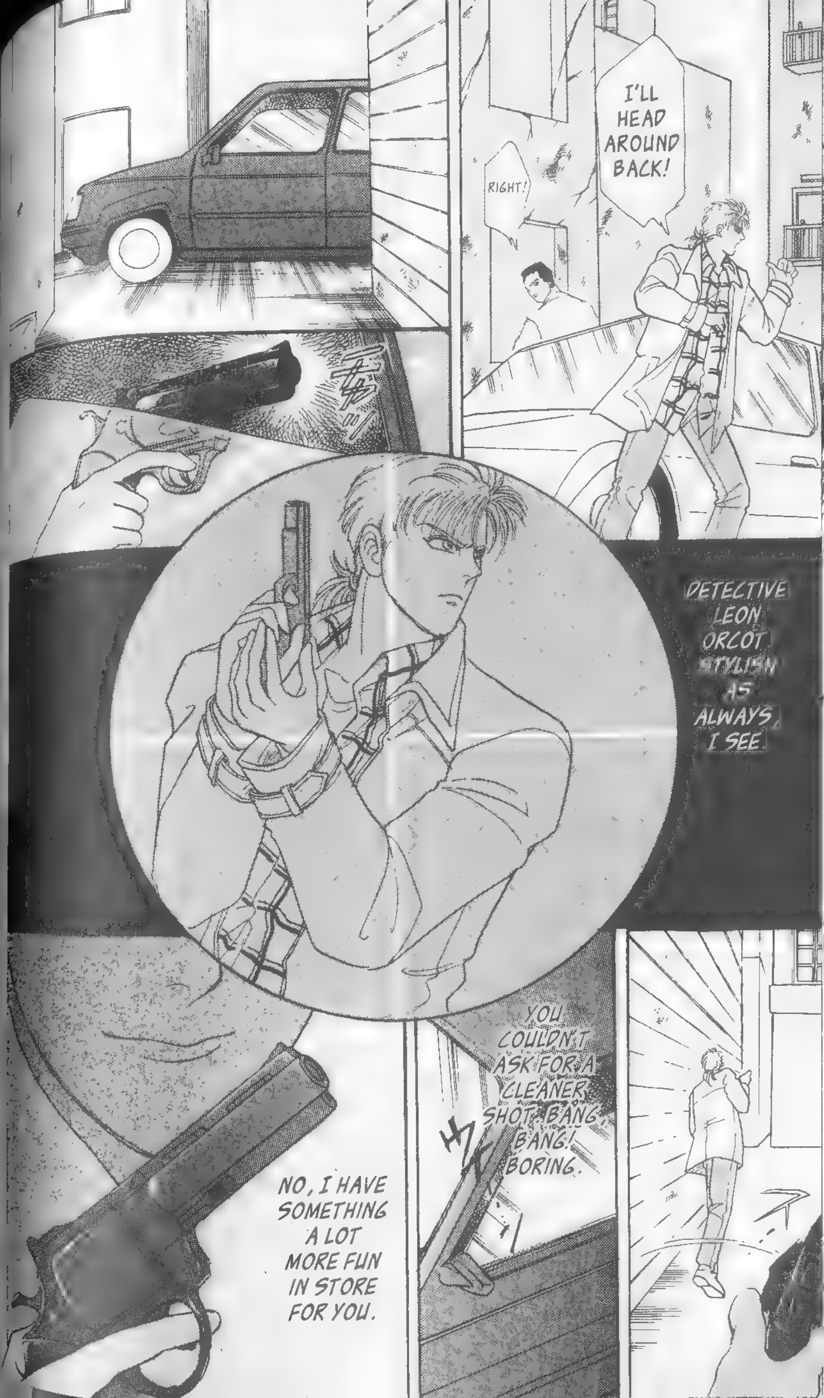

WHAT'S WITH THAT LOOK HE GAVE ME?
I'VE NEVER SEEN THE COUNT SO ANGRY. IT WAS LIKE HE WAS OVERFLOWING WITH PURE, UNFILTERED RAGE.
Shit...
STILL DOESN'T GIVE THE GUY A REASON TO HIT ME.
FUCKING COUNT...
ゴォォォ

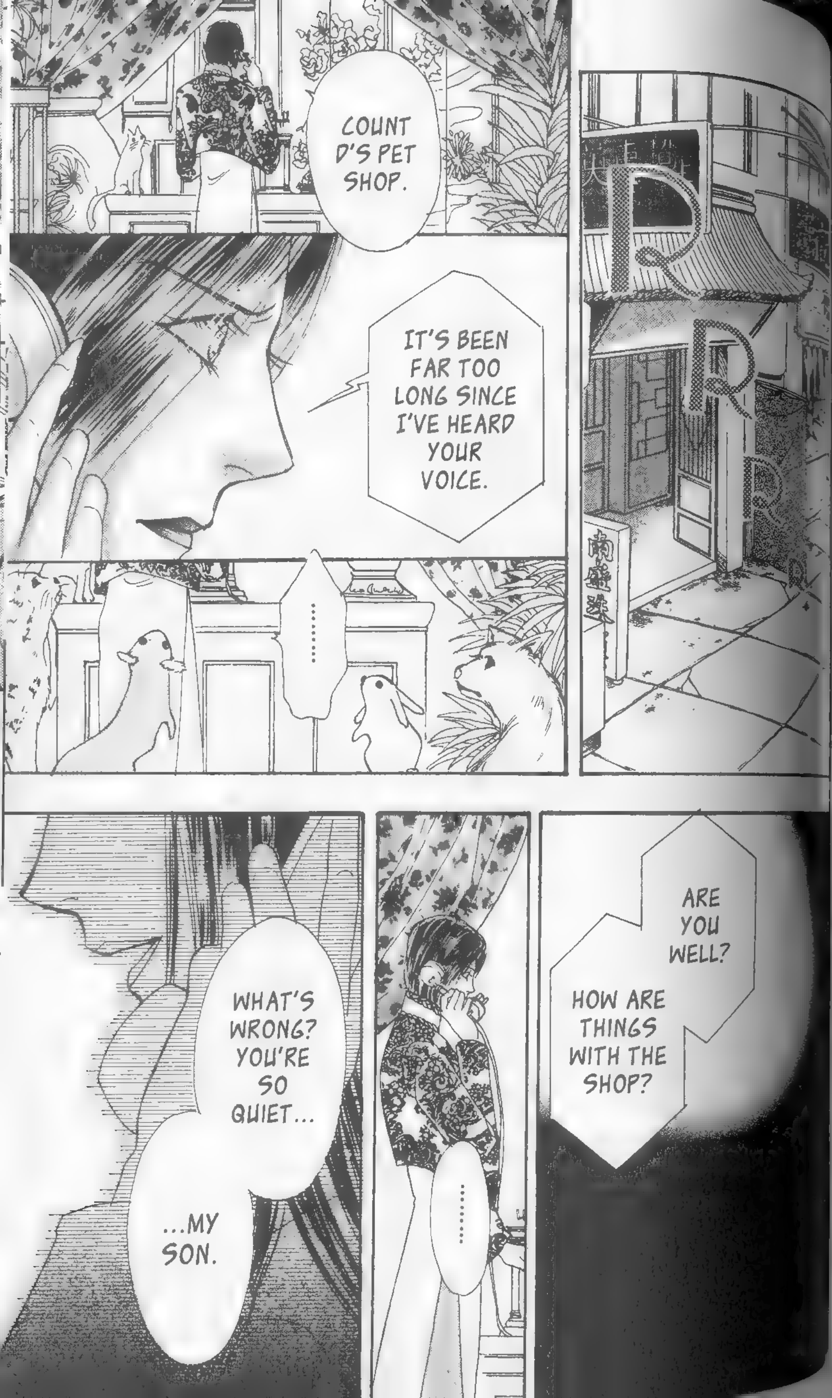

DESPITE THE POOLED EFFORTS OF COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS, FOREST FIRES CONTINUE TO RAGE FOR A SIXTH DAY ON THIS UNINHABITED ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF NEW ZEALAND.
OVER 40,000 HECTARES, APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF THE ISLAND, HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.
THE FIRES ARE LIKELY THE RESULT OF UNSUPERVISED CAMPFIRES SET BY TOURISTS, THOUGH SPECULATION IS RISING THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY SET.
THE DESTROYED TERRAIN IS HOME TO NUMEROUS SPECIES OF WILDLIFE, MANY ON THE ENDANGERED LIST, INCLUDING A RARE SPECIES OF BIRD--
PERHAPS THIS NEWS IS THE CAUSE OF MY DREAM.
BIRDS THAT CANNOT FLY AMIDST A BURNING PLAIN...
...CRYING OUT, UNABLE TO ESCAPE...
I CAN HEAR THEIR CRIES FROM HERE.

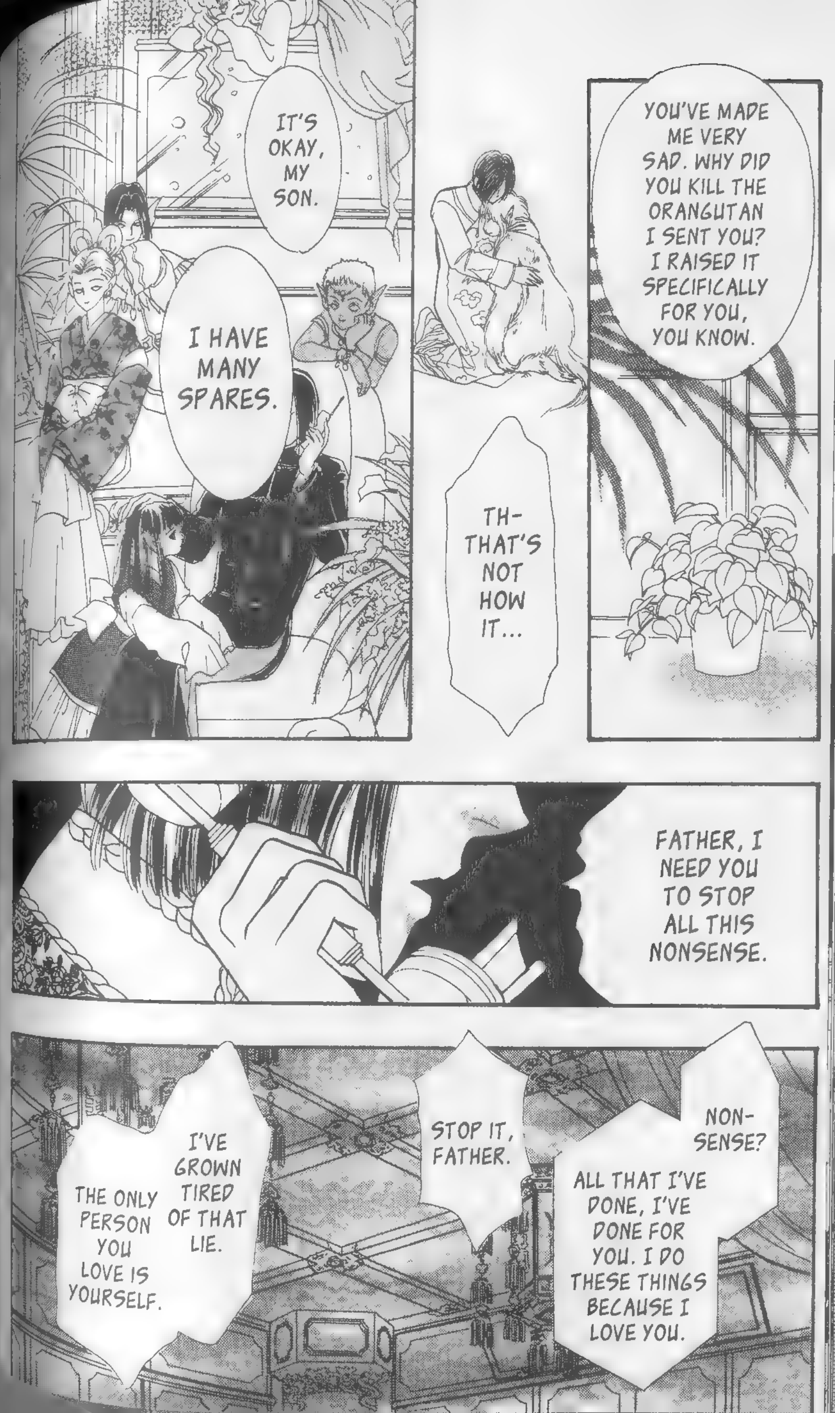

......
COUNT?
EVEN THESE HANDS AREN WITHOUT GUIL
LONG AGO, HUMANS FROM THE MAINLAND...
...HUNTED THE ISLAND'S RABBITS AND FOXES FOR RECREATION.
THEY CAME WITH DOGS.
DOGS THAT UPSET THE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM.
EVEN TODAY...
...MAN IS OFTEN WILLING TO DISCARD THE FUTURE FOR THE SAKE OF THE PRESENT.

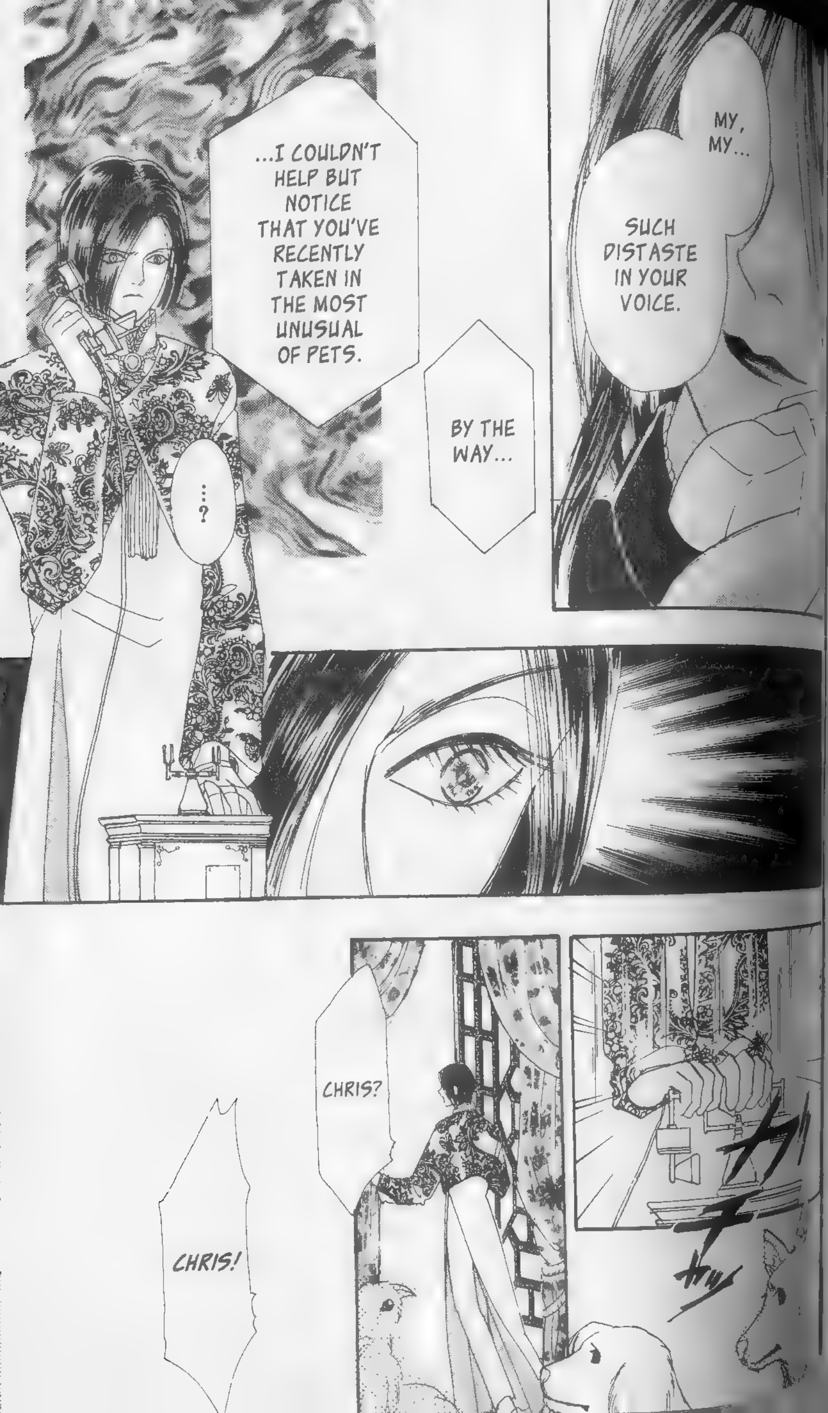

COUNT!
!!
YOU OKAY?
HUH? OH, YES.
DOES IT STILL HURT?
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
OKAY... WELL, THAT'S GOOD...
UM...
WHAT IS IT?
WELL...
I UNDERSTAND.
THIS TIME, I'M THE ONE AT FAULT.
I'LL APOLOGIZE TO YOUR BROTHER.
NOW, GO ON OUTSIDE AND PLAY.
SURE!
T-CHAN, PON-CHAN, LET'S GO!
rgot cap.

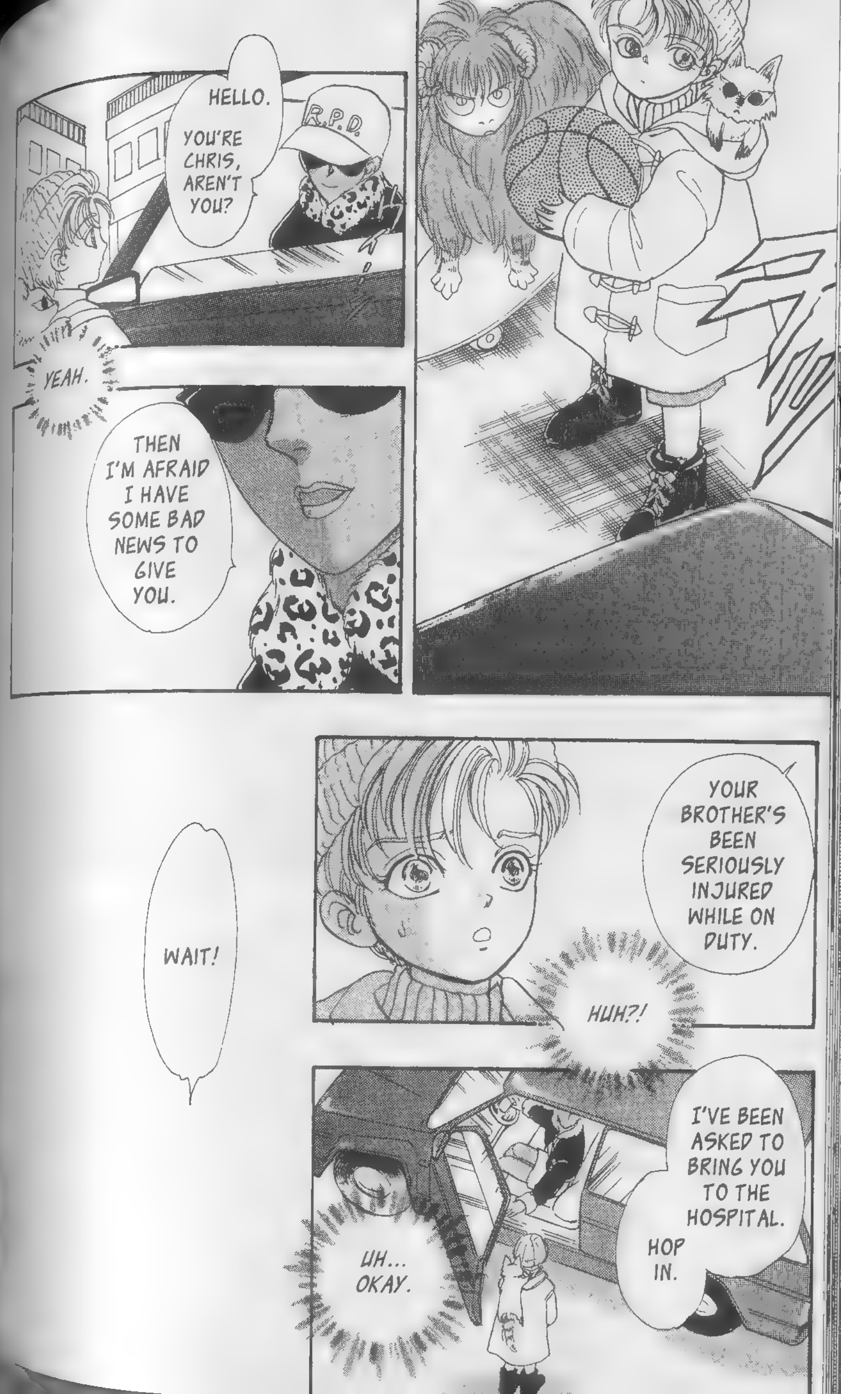

パタパタ
SIGH...
LEON DOESN'T REALIZE HOW LUCKY HE WAS.
Hmph.
D's animals aren't the only ones with claws!
Shit!
FUCKING SIGNALS...
COME ON, YOU DAMN LIGHT! I DON'T HAVE ALL DAY!
Leon's crankier than usual.
ARMED ROBBERY IN PROGRESS AT THE DISCOUNT MART ON LA CIENEGA. OFFICERS IN THE VICINITY ARE TO IMMEDIATELY--
AWRIGHT!!

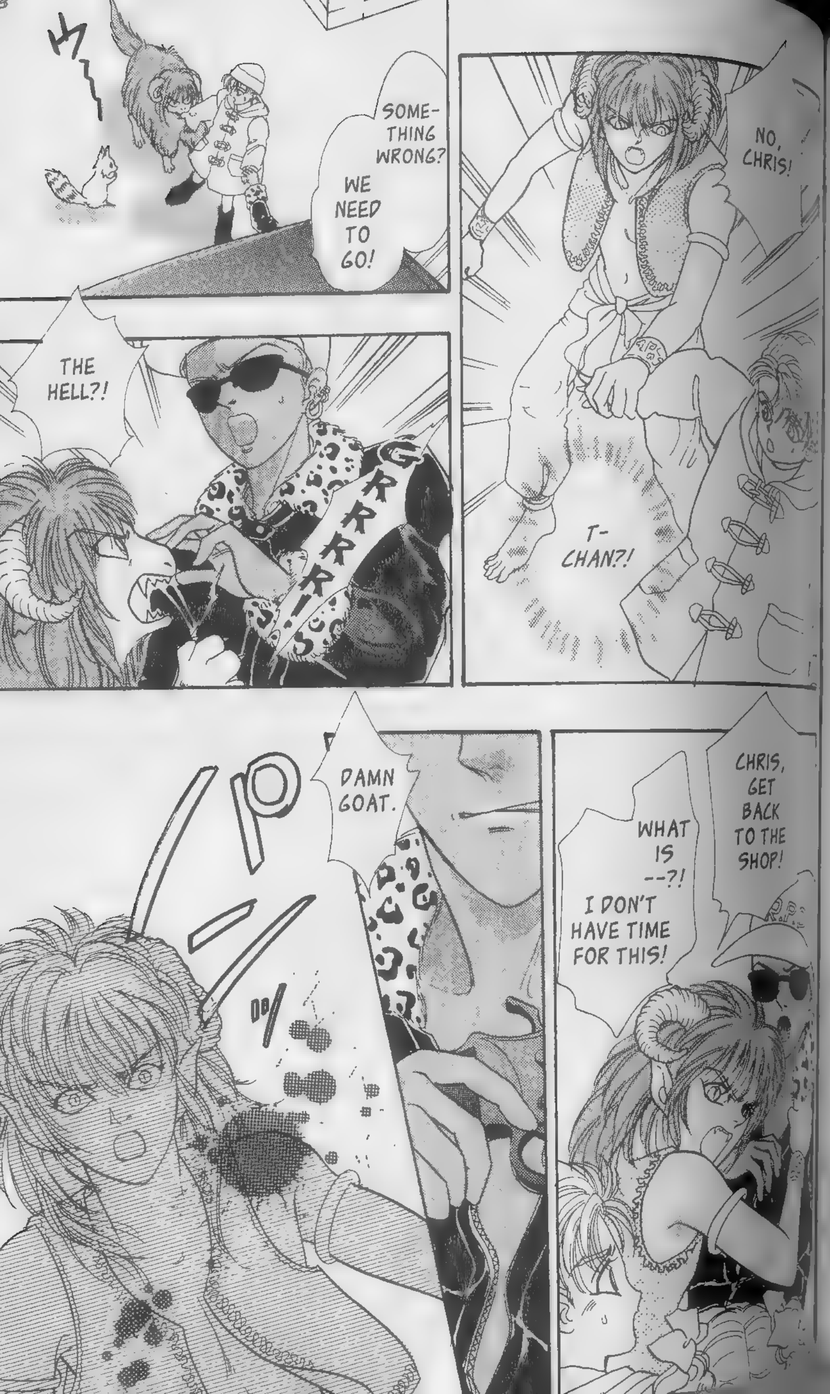

I'LL HEAD AROUND BACK!
RIGHT!
DETECTIVE LEON ORCOT STYLISH AS ALWAYS, I SEE.
YOU COULDN'T ASK FOR A CLEANER SHOT. BANG BANG! BORING.
NO, I HAVE SOMETHING A LOT MORE FUN IN STORE FOR YOU.

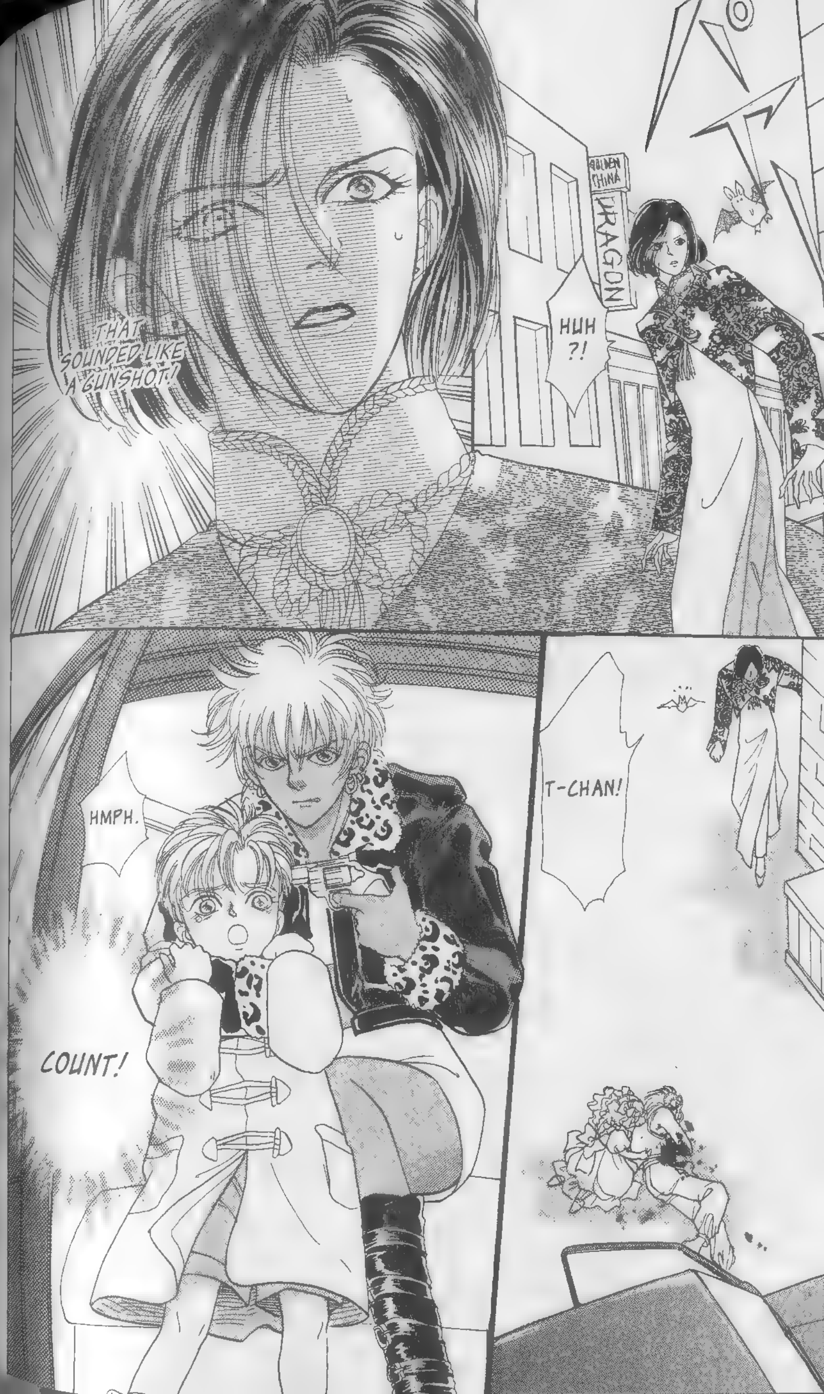

COUNT D'S PET SHOP.
IT'S BEEN FAR TOO LONG SINCE I'VE HEARD YOUR VOICE.
......
ARE YOU WELL?
HOW ARE THINGS WITH THE SHOP?
......
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE SO QUIET...
...MY SON.

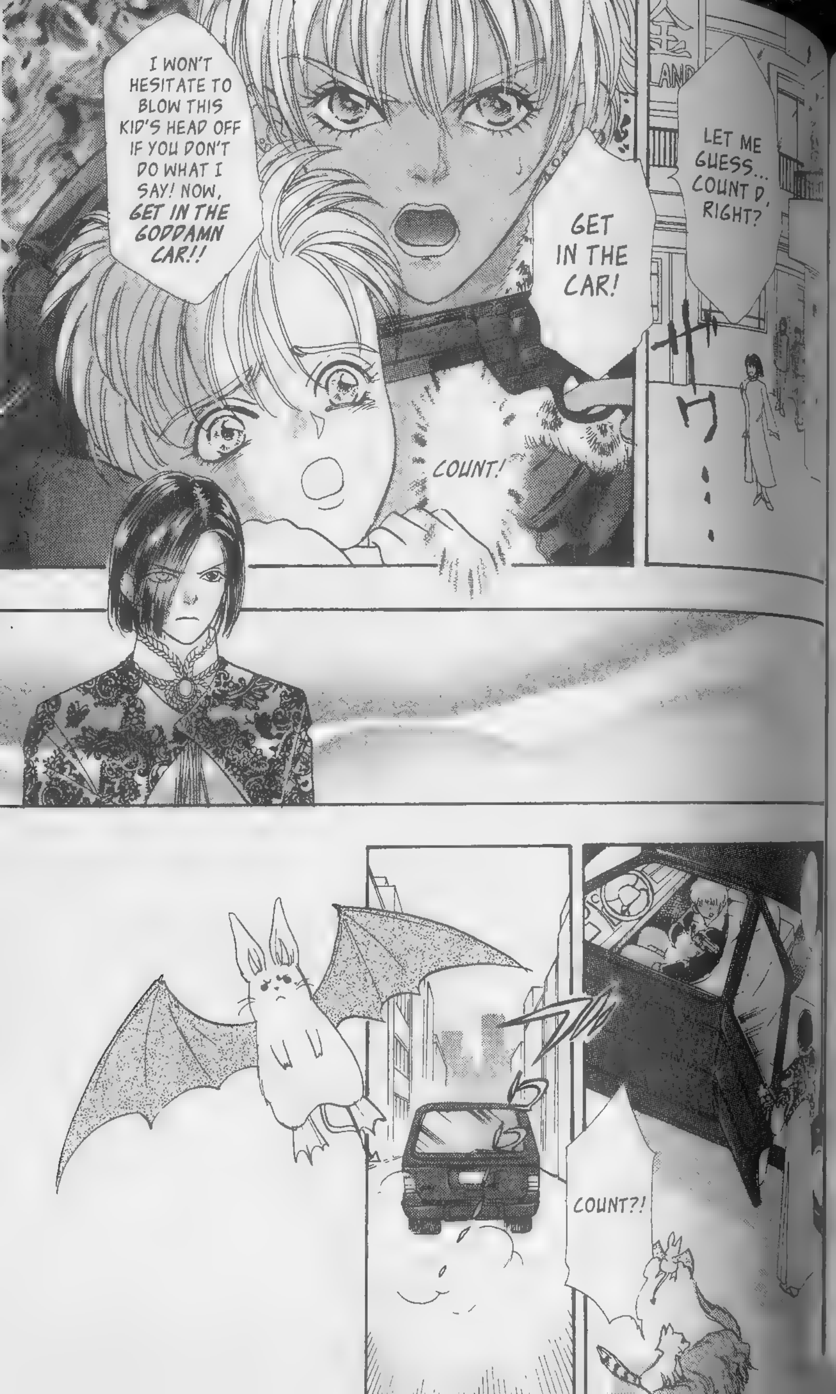

YOU'VE MADE ME VERY SAD. WHY DID YOU KILL THE ORANGUTAN I SENT YOU? I RAISED IT SPECIFICALLY FOR YOU, YOU KNOW.
TH- THAT'S NOT HOW IT...
IT'S OKAY, MY SON.
I HAVE MANY SPARES.
FATHER, I NEED YOU TO STOP ALL THIS NONSENSE.
NON-SENSE?
ALL THAT I'VE DONE, I'VE DONE FOR YOU. I DO THESE THINGS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
STOP IT, FATHER.
I'VE GROWN TIRED OF THAT LIE.
THE ONLY PERSON YOU LOVE IS YOURSELF.

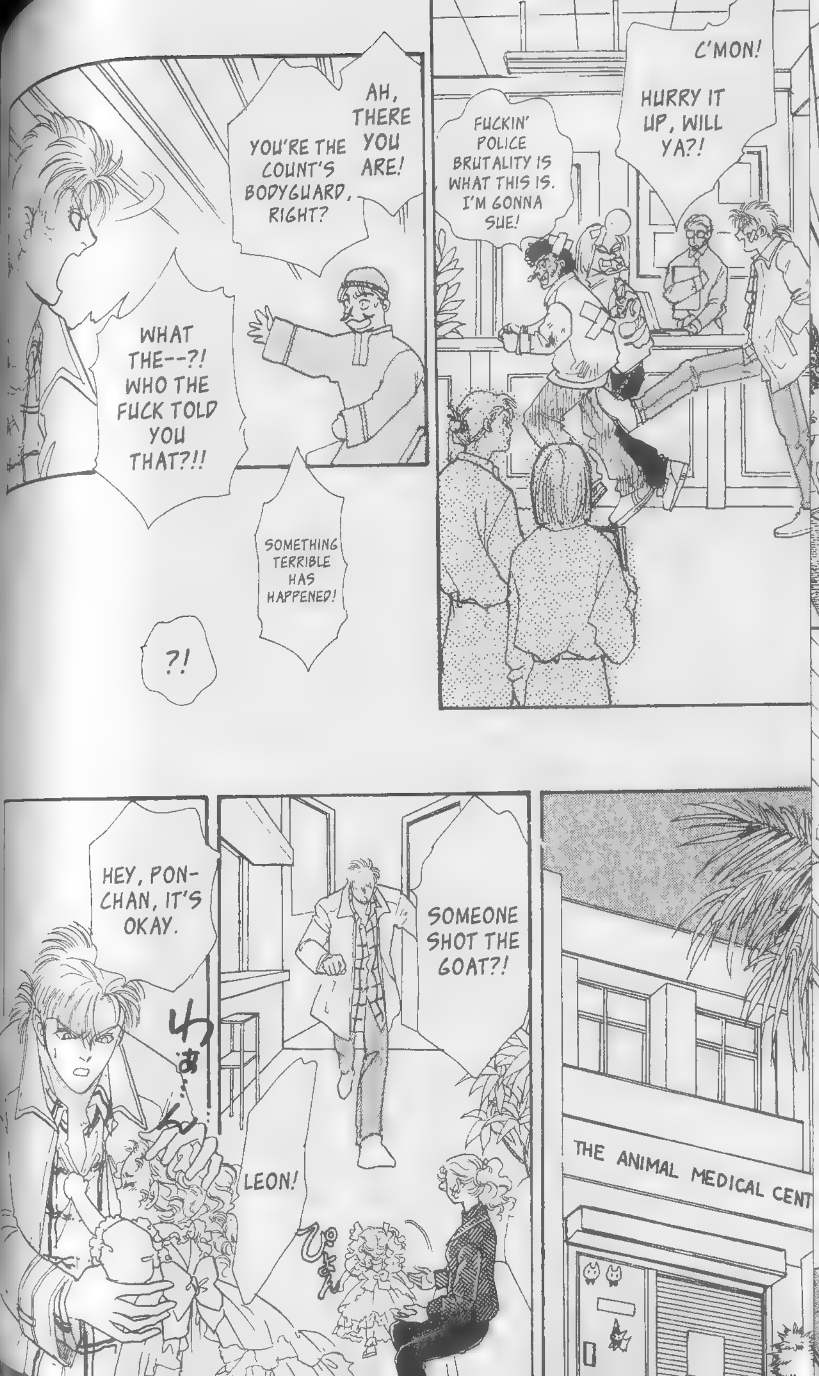

MY, MY...
SUCH DISTASTE IN YOUR VOICE.
BY THE WAY...
...I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THAT YOU'VE RECENTLY TAKEN IN THE MOST UNUSUAL OF PETS.
...?
CHRIS?
CHRIS!

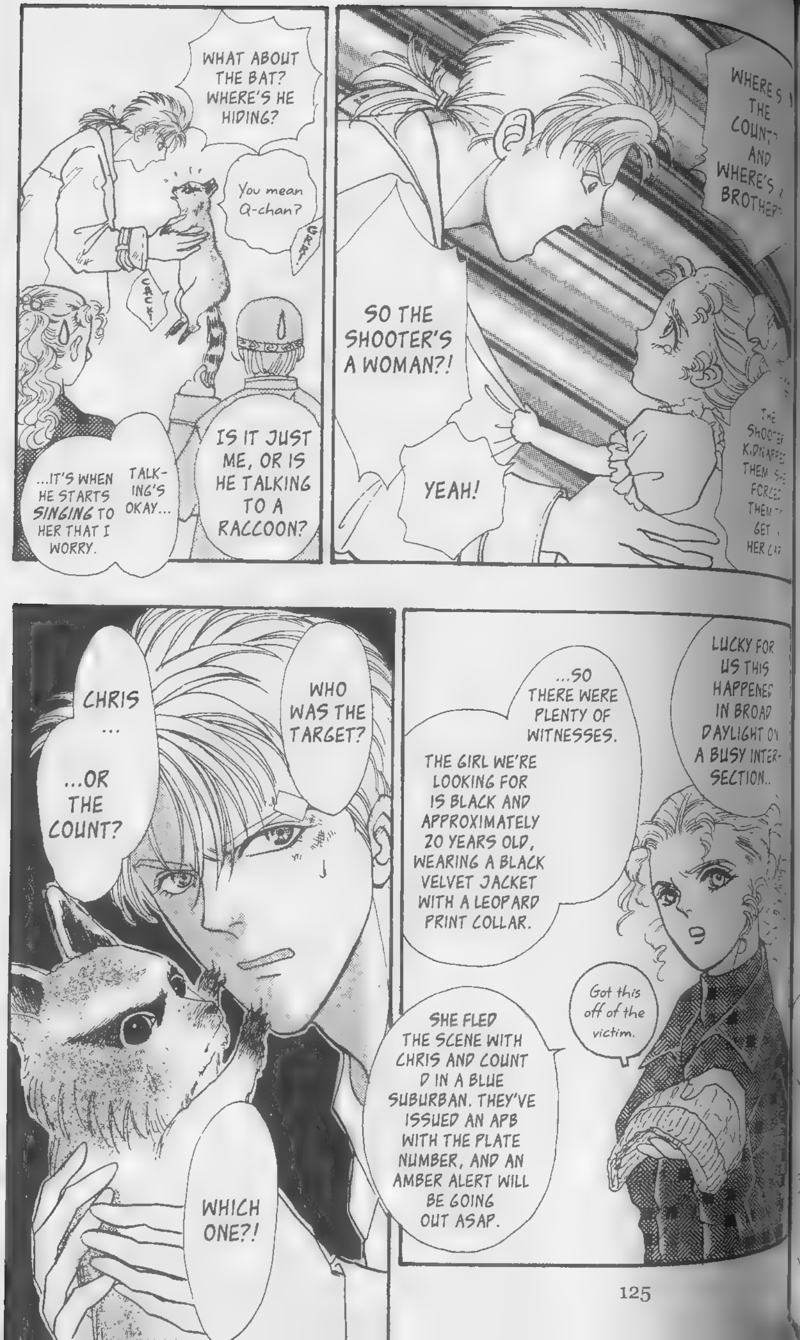

HELLO.
YOU'RE CHRIS, AREN'T YOU?
R.P.D.
YEAH.
THEN I'M AFRAID I HAVE SOME BAD NEWS TO GIVE YOU.
YOUR BROTHER'S BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED WHILE ON DUTY.
HUH?!
I'VE BEEN ASKED TO BRING YOU TO THE HOSPITAL.
HOP IN.
UH... OKAY.
WAIT!

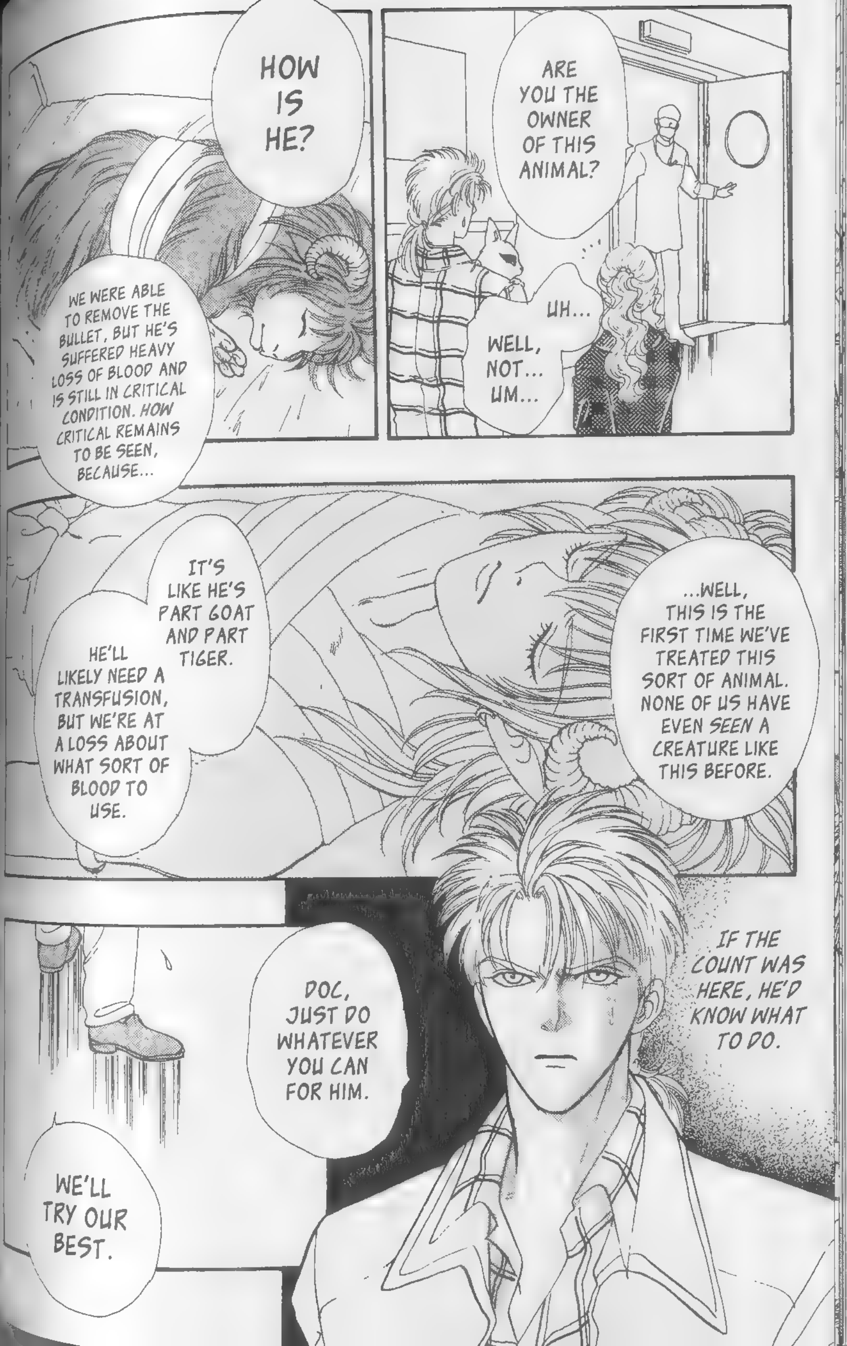

NO, CHRIS!
T-CHAN?!
SOMETHING WRONG?
WE NEED TO GO!
THE HELL?!
GRRRR!
CHRIS, GET BACK TO THE SHOP!
WHAT IS --?!
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS!
DAMN GOAT.

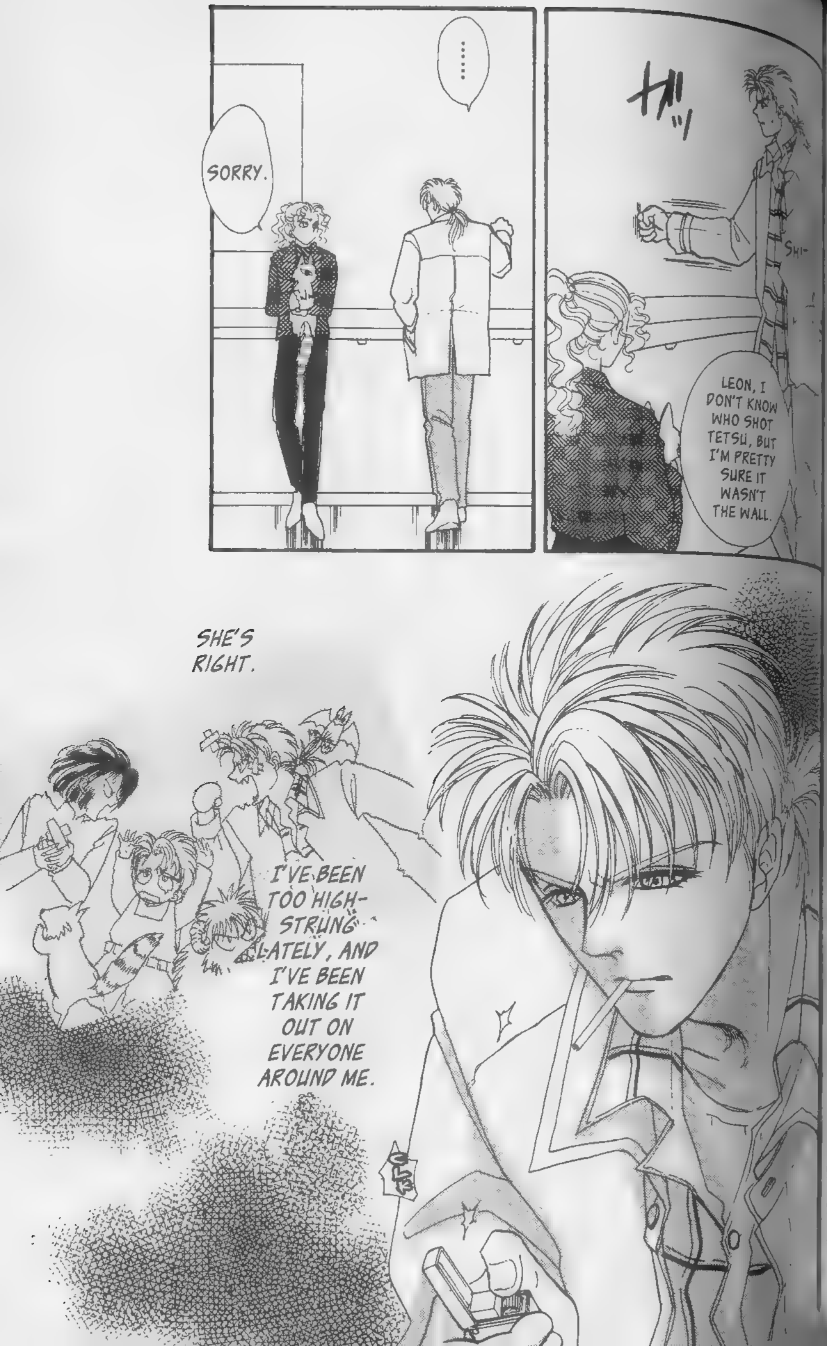

GOLDEN CHINA
DRAGON
HUH ?!
THAT SOUNDED LIKE A GUNSHOT!
T-CHAN!
HMPH.
COUNT!

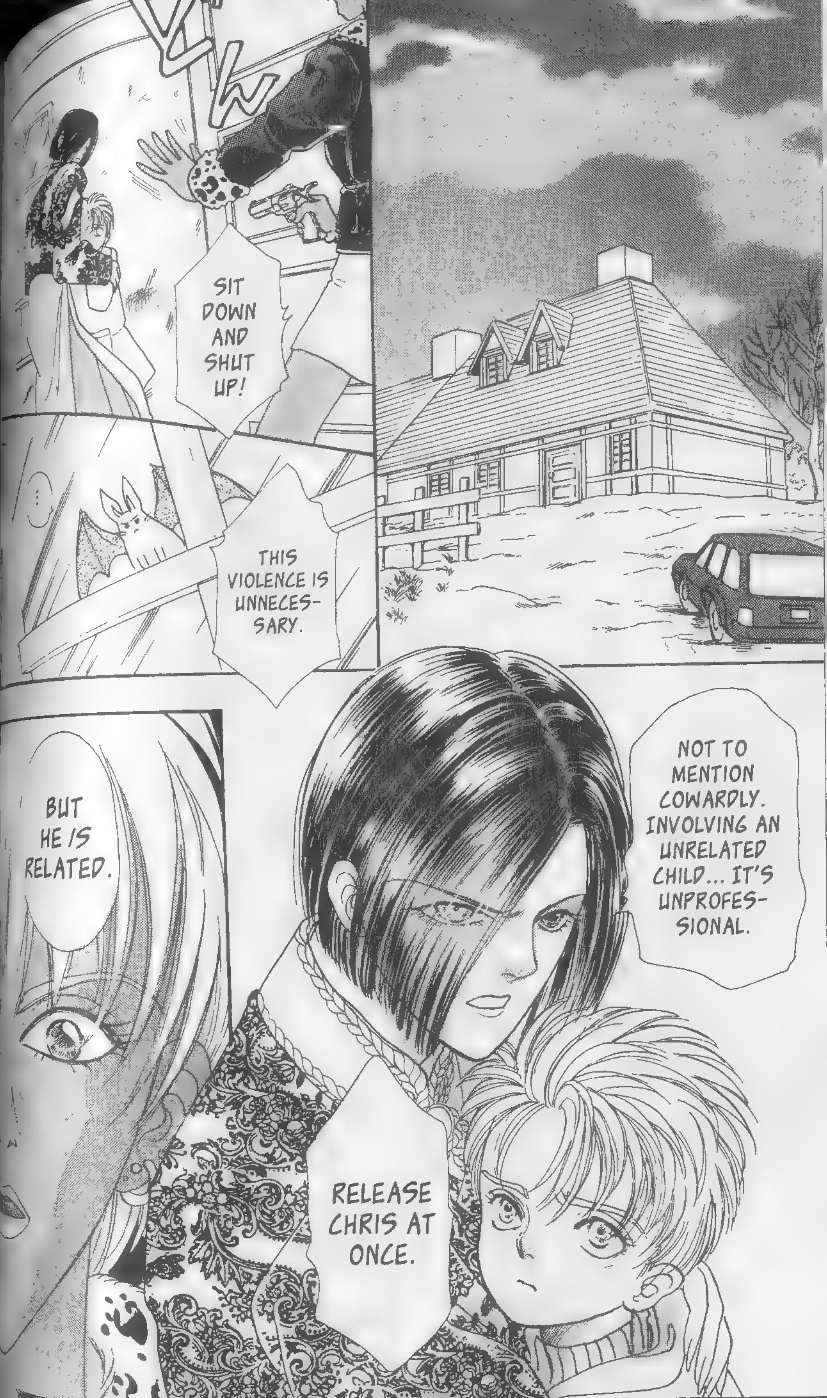

LAND
LET ME GUESS... COUNT D, RIGHT?
GET IN THE CAR!
I WON'T HESITATE TO BLOW THIS KID'S HEAD OFF IF YOU DON'T DO WHAT I SAY! NOW, ***GET IN THE GODDAMN CAR!!***
COUNT!
COUNT?!

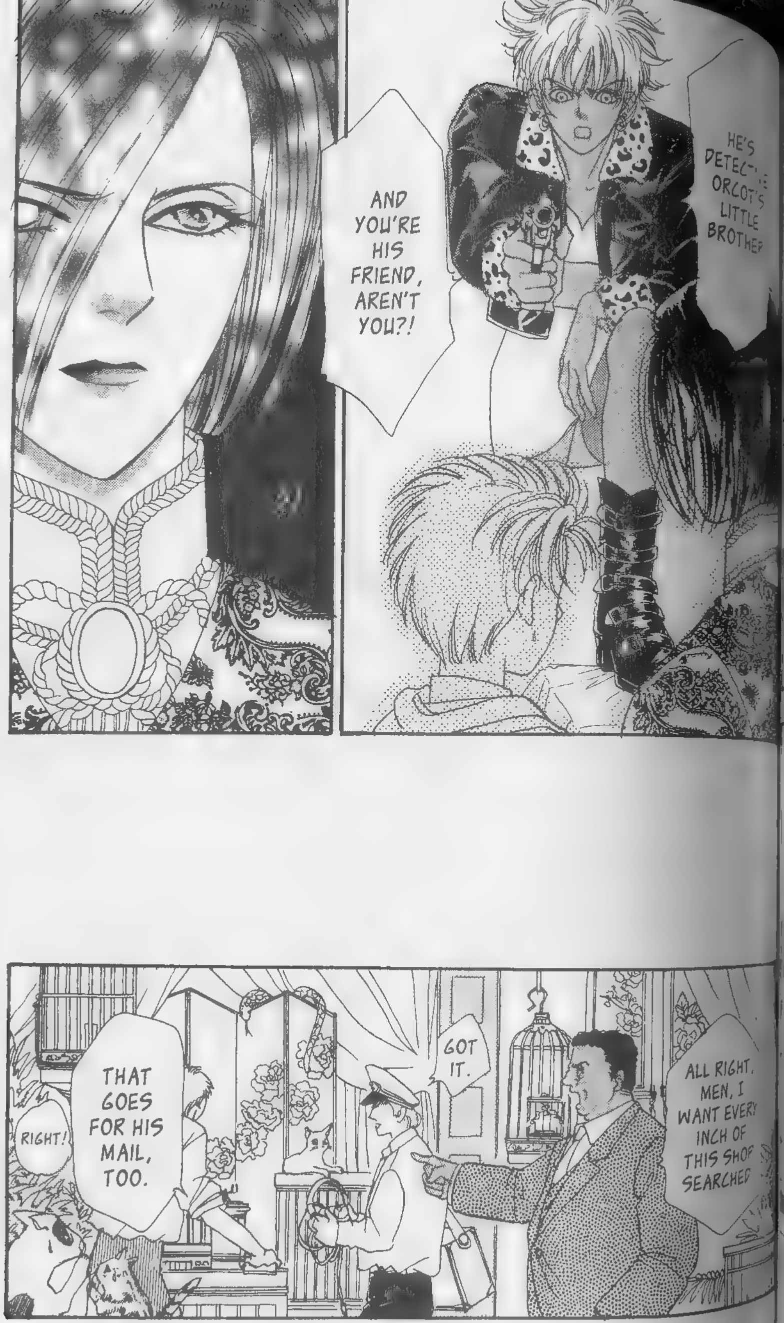

C'MON!
HURRY IT UP, WILL YA?!
FUCKIN' POLICE BRUTALITY IS WHAT THIS IS. I'M GONNA SUE!
AH, THERE YOU ARE!
YOU'RE THE COUNT'S BODYGUARD, RIGHT?
WHAT THE--?! WHO THE FUCK TOLD YOU THAT?!!
SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED!
?!
THE ANIMAL MEDICAL CENT
SOMEONE SHOT THE GOAT?!
LEON!
ぴょ
HEY, PON-CHAN, IT'S OKAY.
わあ～ん

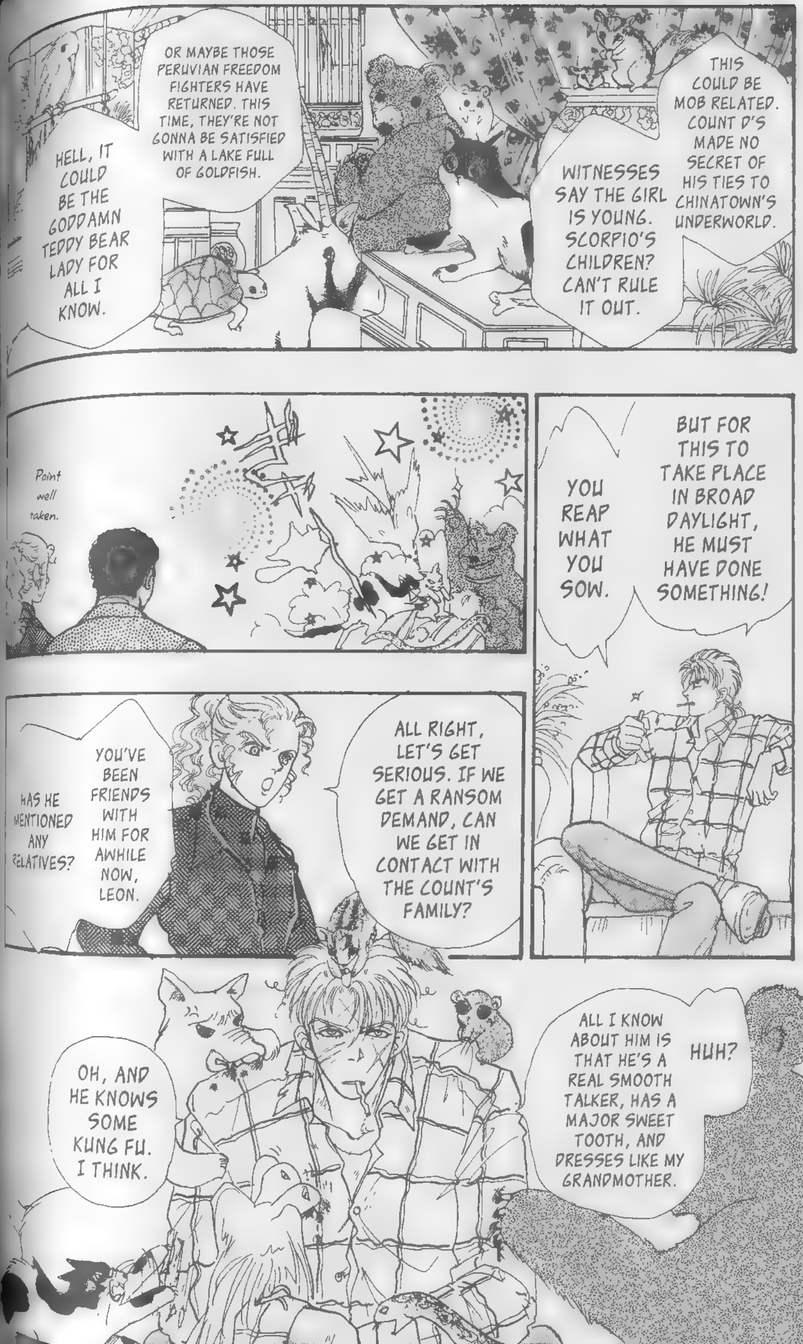

WHERE'S THE COUN AND WHERE'S BROTHE
THE SHOOTER KIDNAPPED THEM. SHE FORCED THEM TO GET IN HER CA
SO THE SHOOTER'S A WOMAN?!
YEAH!
WHAT ABOUT THE BAT? WHERE'S HE HIDING?
You mean Q-chan?
GRR
CACK
IS IT JUST ME, OR IS HE TALKING TO A RACCOON?
TALKING'S OKAY...
...IT'S WHEN HE STARTS SINGING TO HER THAT I WORRY.
LUCKY FOR US THIS HAPPENED IN BROAD DAYLIGHT ON A BUSY INTERSECTION..
...SO THERE WERE PLENTY OF WITNESSES.
THE GIRL WE'RE LOOKING FOR IS BLACK AND APPROXIMATELY 20 YEARS OLD, WEARING A BLACK VELVET JACKET WITH A LEOPARD PRINT COLLAR.
Got this off of the victim.
SHE FLED THE SCENE WITH CHRIS AND COUNT D IN A BLUE SUBURBAN. THEY'VE ISSUED AN APB WITH THE PLATE NUMBER, AND AN AMBER ALERT WILL BE GOING OUT ASAP.
WHO WAS THE TARGET?
CHRIS...
...OR THE COUNT?
WHICH ONE?!

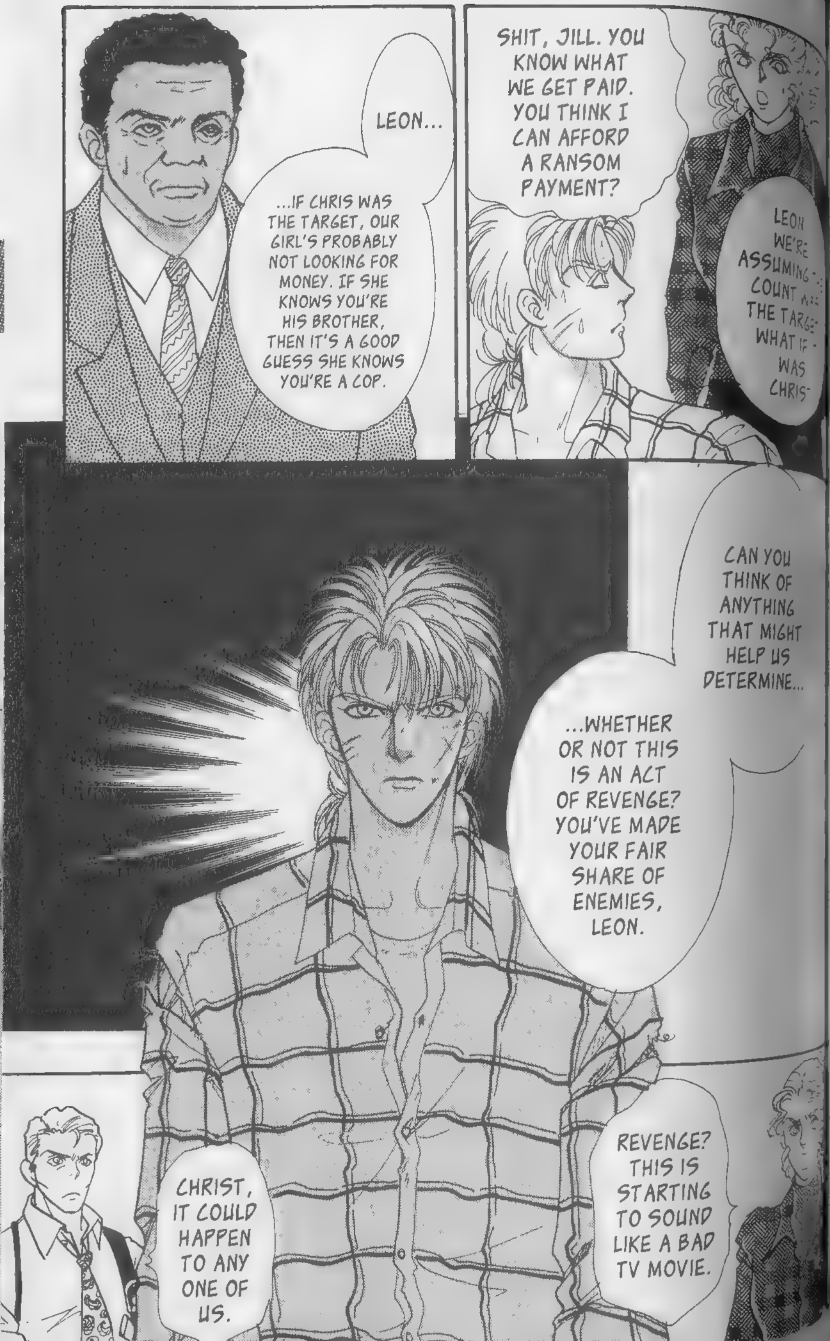

ARE YOU THE OWNER OF THIS ANIMAL?
UH... WELL, NOT... UM...
HOW IS HE?
WE WERE ABLE TO REMOVE THE BULLET, BUT HE'S SUFFERED HEAVY LOSS OF BLOOD AND IS STILL IN CRITICAL CONDITION. HOW CRITICAL REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BECAUSE...
...WELL, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE TREATED THIS SORT OF ANIMAL. NONE OF US HAVE EVEN SEEN A CREATURE LIKE THIS BEFORE.
IT'S LIKE HE'S PART GOAT AND PART TIGER.
HE'LL LIKELY NEED A TRANSFUSION, BUT WE'RE AT A LOSS ABOUT WHAT SORT OF BLOOD TO USE.
IF THE COUNT WAS HERE, HE'D KNOW WHAT TO DO.
DOC, JUST DO WHATEVER YOU CAN FOR HIM.
WE'LL TRY OUR BEST.

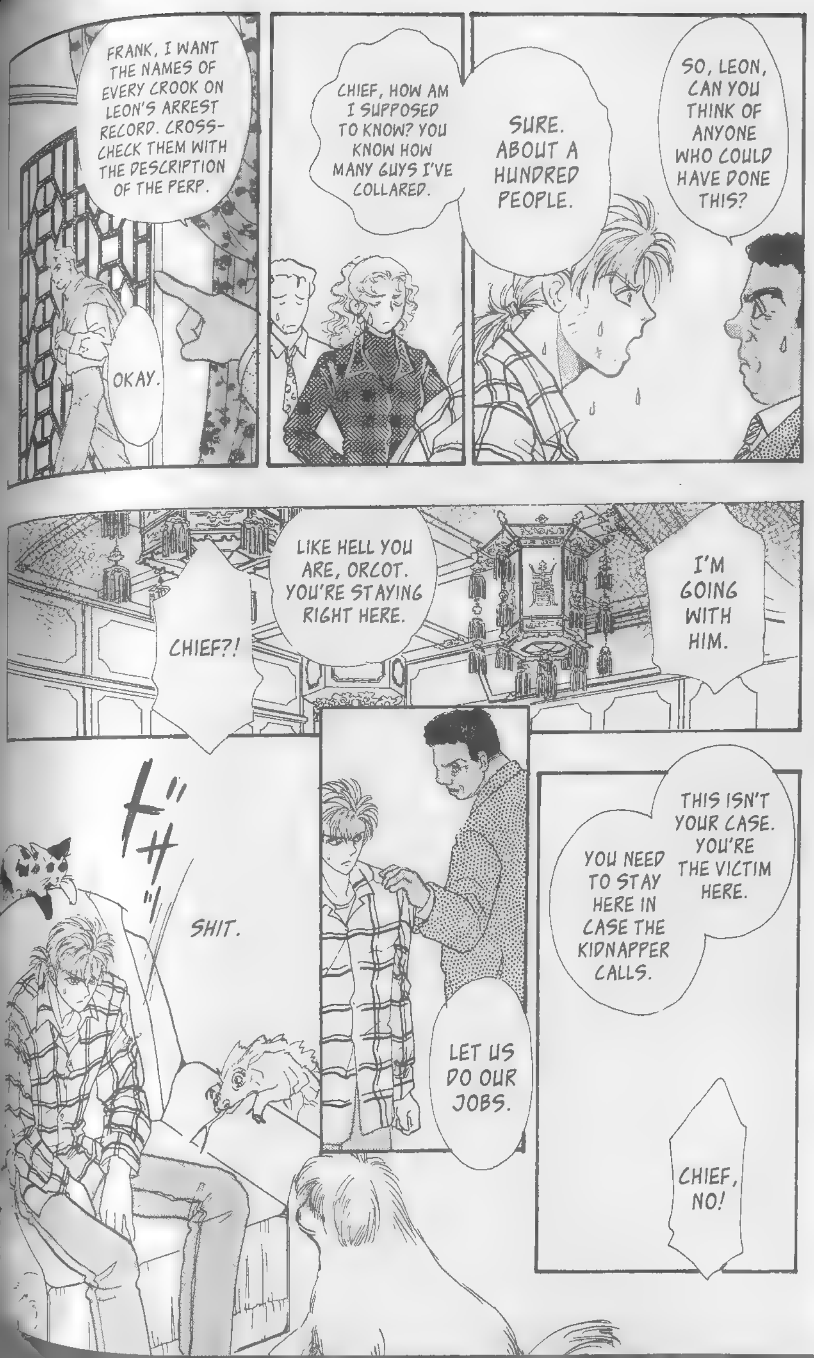

ガッ
SHI-
LEON, I DON'T KNOW WHO SHOT TETSU, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE IT WASN'T THE WALL.
......
SORRY.
SHE'S RIGHT.
I'VE BEEN TOO HIGH-STRUNG LATELY, AND I'VE BEEN TAKING IT OUT ON EVERYONE AROUND ME.

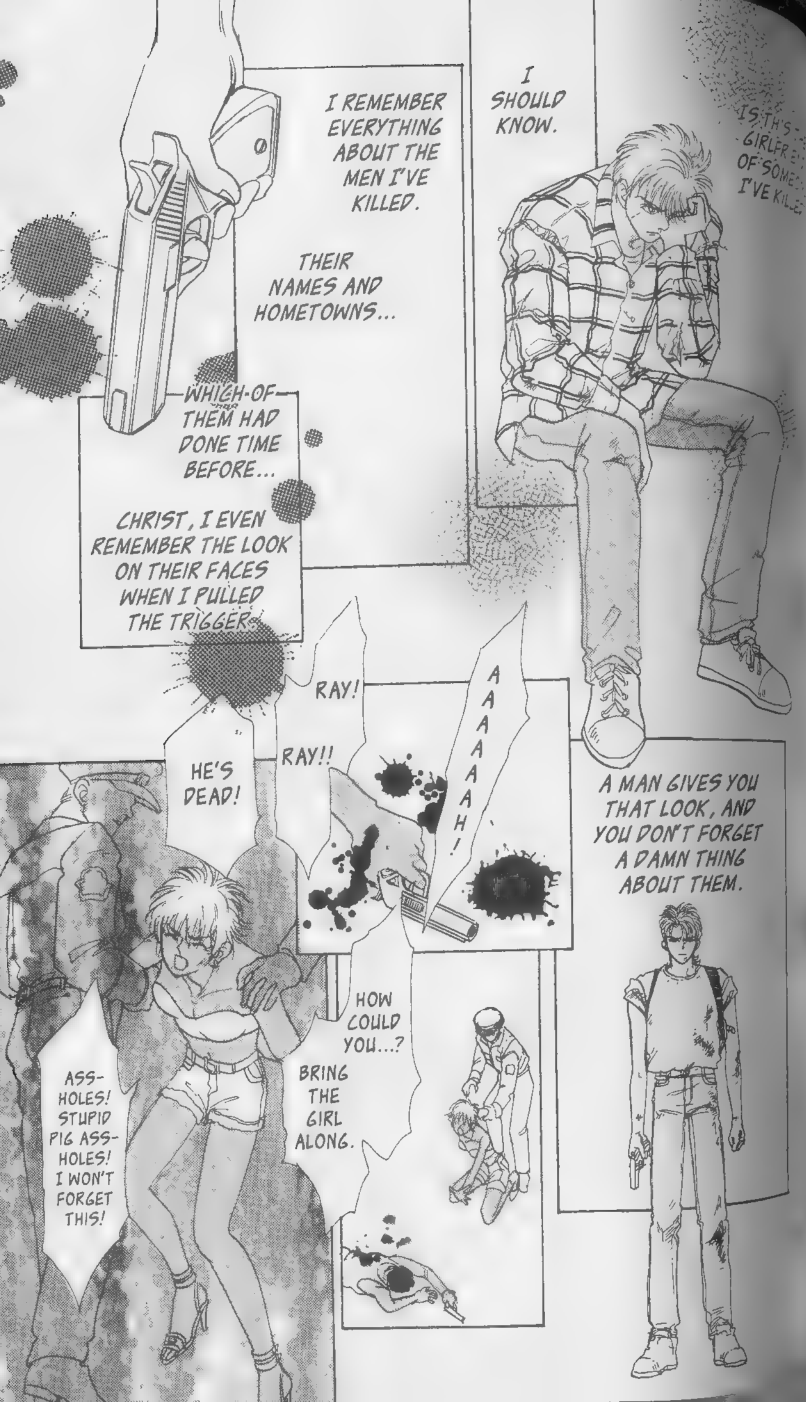

SIT DOWN AND SHUT UP!
...
THIS VIOLENCE IS UNNECESSARY.
NOT TO MENTION COWARDLY. INVOLVING AN UNRELATED CHILD... IT'S UNPROFESSIONAL.
RELEASE CHRIS AT ONCE.
BUT HE *IS* RELATED.

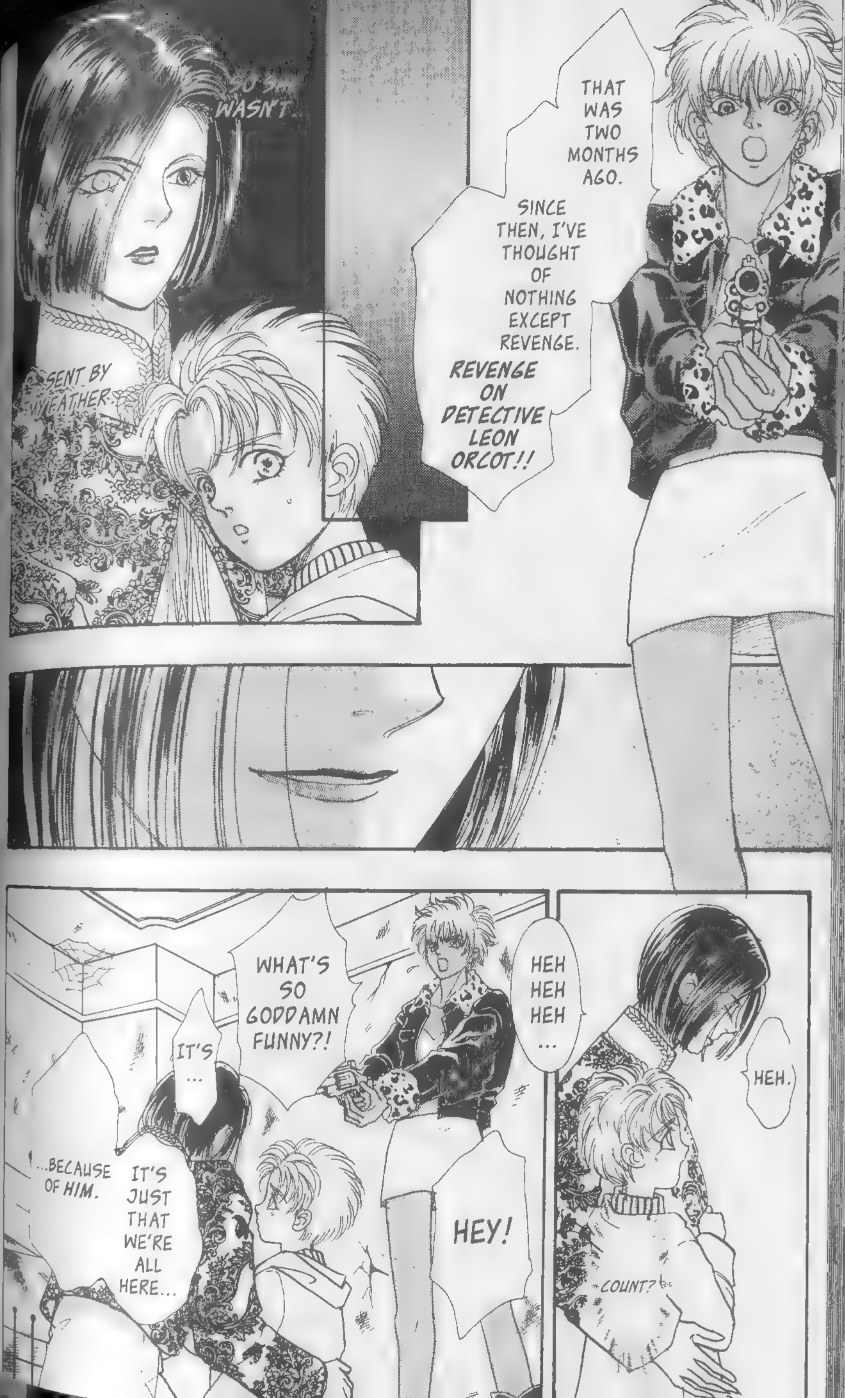

HE'S DETECTIVE ORCOT'S LITTLE BROTHER
AND YOU'RE HIS FRIEND, AREN'T YOU?!
ALL RIGHT, MEN, I WANT EVERY INCH OF THIS SHOP SEARCHED
GOT IT.
THAT GOES FOR HIS MAIL, TOO.
RIGHT!

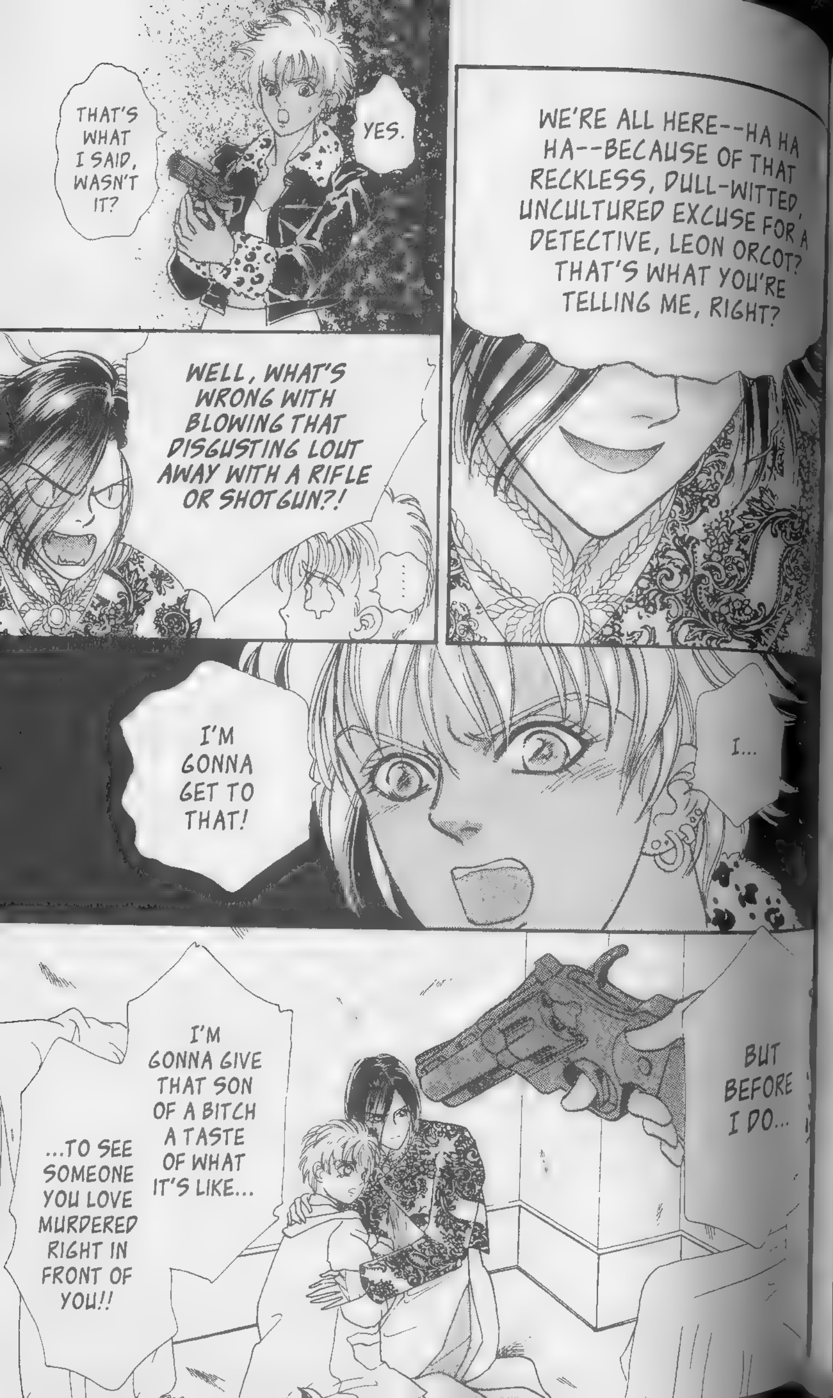

THIS COULD BE MOB RELATED. COUNT D'S MADE NO SECRET OF HIS TIES TO CHINATOWN'S UNDERWORLD.
WITNESSES SAY THE GIRL IS YOUNG. SCORPIO'S CHILDREN? CAN'T RULE IT OUT.
HELL, IT COULD BE THE GODDAMN TEDDY BEAR LADY FOR ALL I KNOW.
OR MAYBE THOSE PERUVIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS HAVE RETURNED. THIS TIME, THEY'RE NOT GONNA BE SATISFIED WITH A LAKE FULL OF GOLDFISH.
BUT FOR THIS TO TAKE PLACE IN BROAD DAYLIGHT, HE MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING!
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.
Point well taken.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GET SERIOUS. IF WE GET A RANSOM DEMAND, CAN WE GET IN CONTACT WITH THE COUNT'S FAMILY?
YOU'VE BEEN FRIENDS WITH HIM FOR AWHILE NOW, LEON.
HAS HE MENTIONED ANY RELATIVES?
HUH?
ALL I KNOW ABOUT HIM IS THAT HE'S A REAL SMOOTH TALKER, HAS A MAJOR SWEET TOOTH, AND DRESSES LIKE MY GRANDMOTHER.
OH, AND HE KNOWS SOME KUNG FU. I THINK.

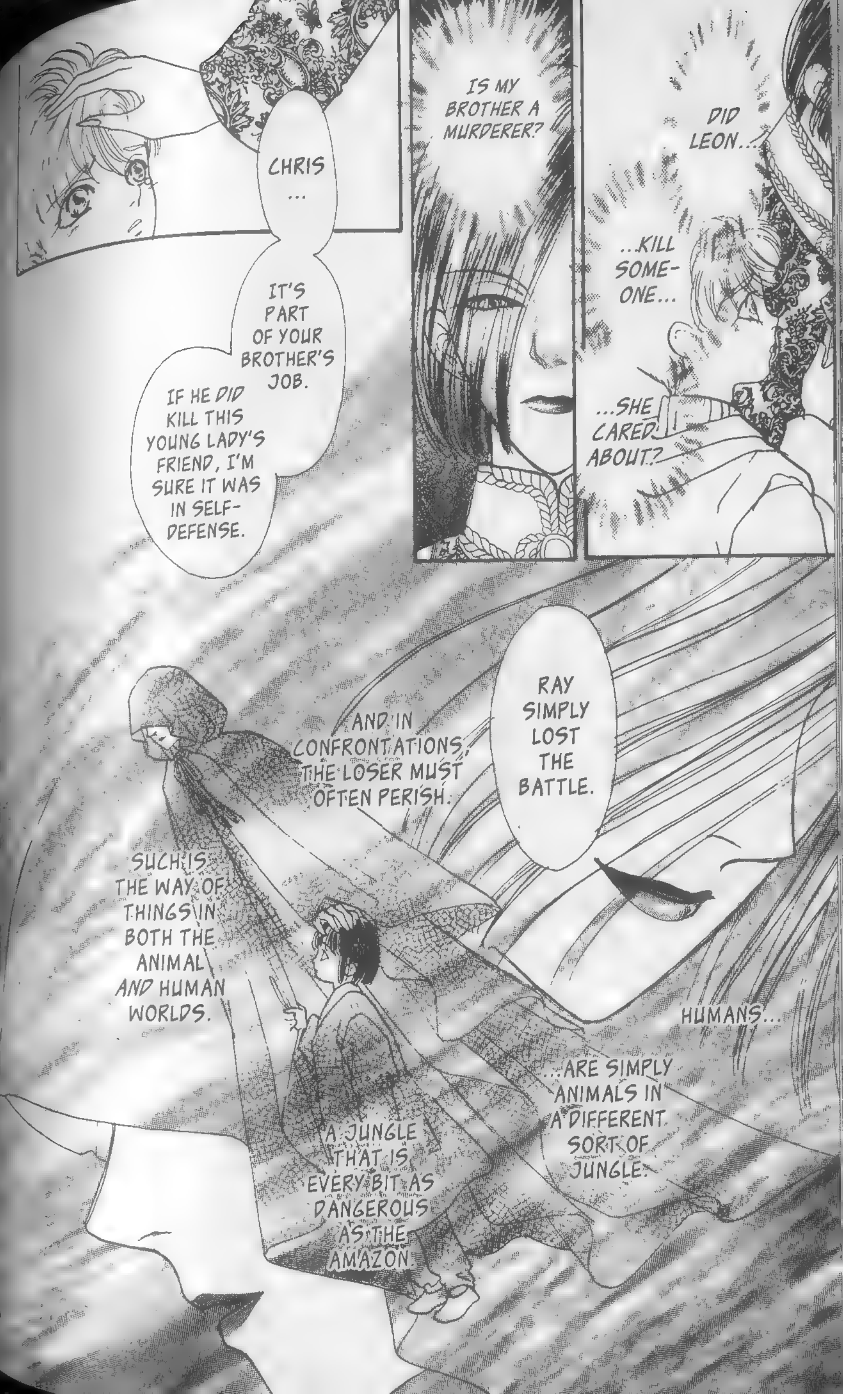

LEON WE'RE ASSUMING COUNT THE TARGE- WHAT IF WAS CHRIS-
SHIT, JILL. YOU KNOW WHAT WE GET PAID. YOU THINK I CAN AFFORD A RANSOM PAYMENT?
LEON...
...IF CHRIS WAS THE TARGET, OUR GIRL'S PROBABLY NOT LOOKING FOR MONEY. IF SHE KNOWS YOU'RE HIS BROTHER, THEN IT'S A GOOD GUESS SHE KNOWS YOU'RE A COP.
CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HELP US DETERMINE...
...WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS AN ACT OF REVENGE? YOU'VE MADE YOUR FAIR SHARE OF ENEMIES, LEON.
REVENGE? THIS IS STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A BAD TV MOVIE.
CHRIST, IT COULD HAPPEN TO ANY ONE OF US.

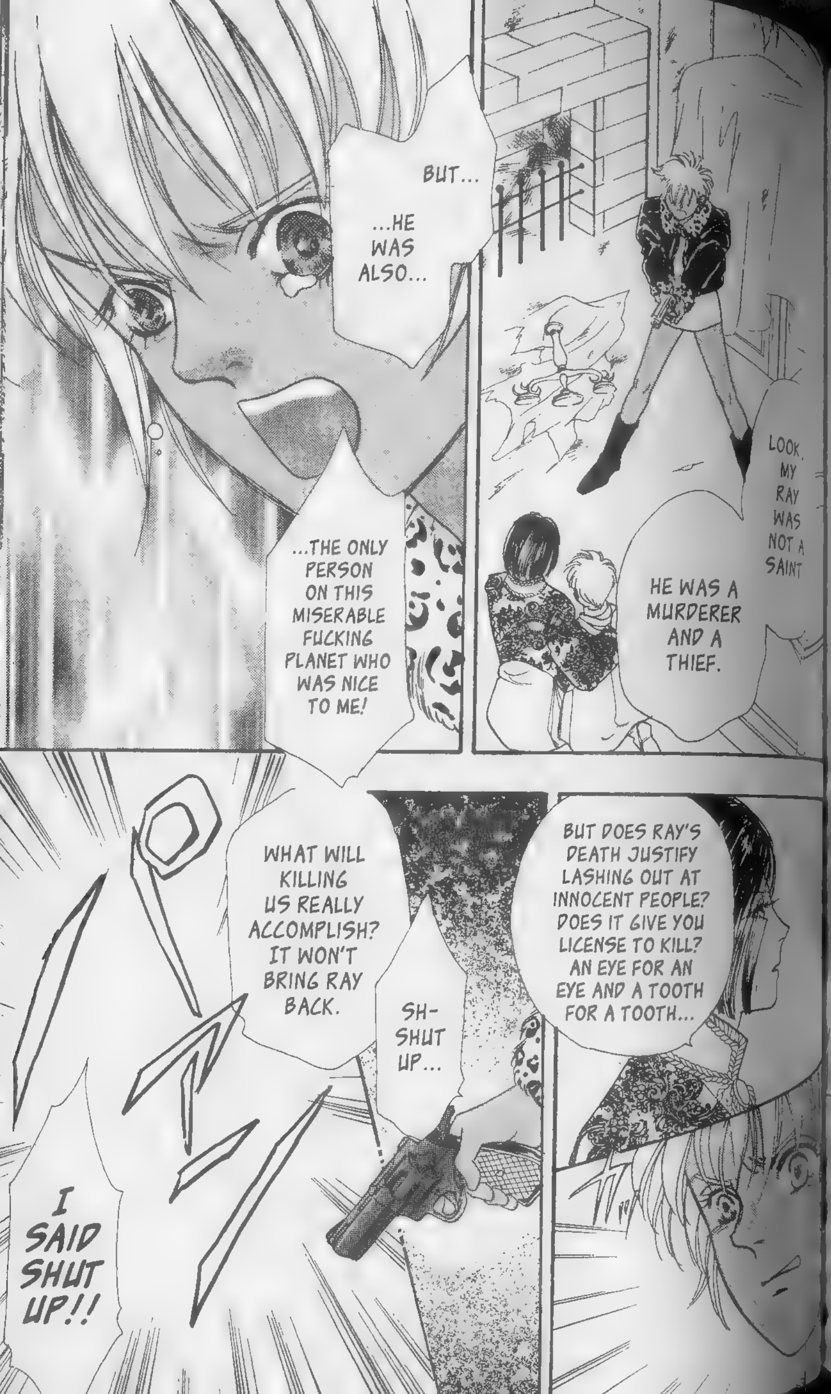

SO, LEON, CAN YOU THINK OF ANYONE WHO COULD HAVE DONE THIS?
SURE. ABOUT A HUNDRED PEOPLE.
CHIEF, HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW? YOU KNOW HOW MANY GUYS I'VE COLLARED.
FRANK, I WANT THE NAMES OF EVERY CROOK ON LEON'S ARREST RECORD. CROSS-CHECK THEM WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PERP.
OKAY.
I'M GOING WITH HIM.
LIKE HELL YOU ARE, ORCOT. YOU'RE STAYING RIGHT HERE.
CHIEF?!
THIS ISN'T YOUR CASE. YOU'RE THE VICTIM HERE.
YOU NEED TO STAY HERE IN CASE THE KIDNAPPER CALLS.
LET US DO OUR JOBS.
CHIEF, NO!
ドサ
SHIT.

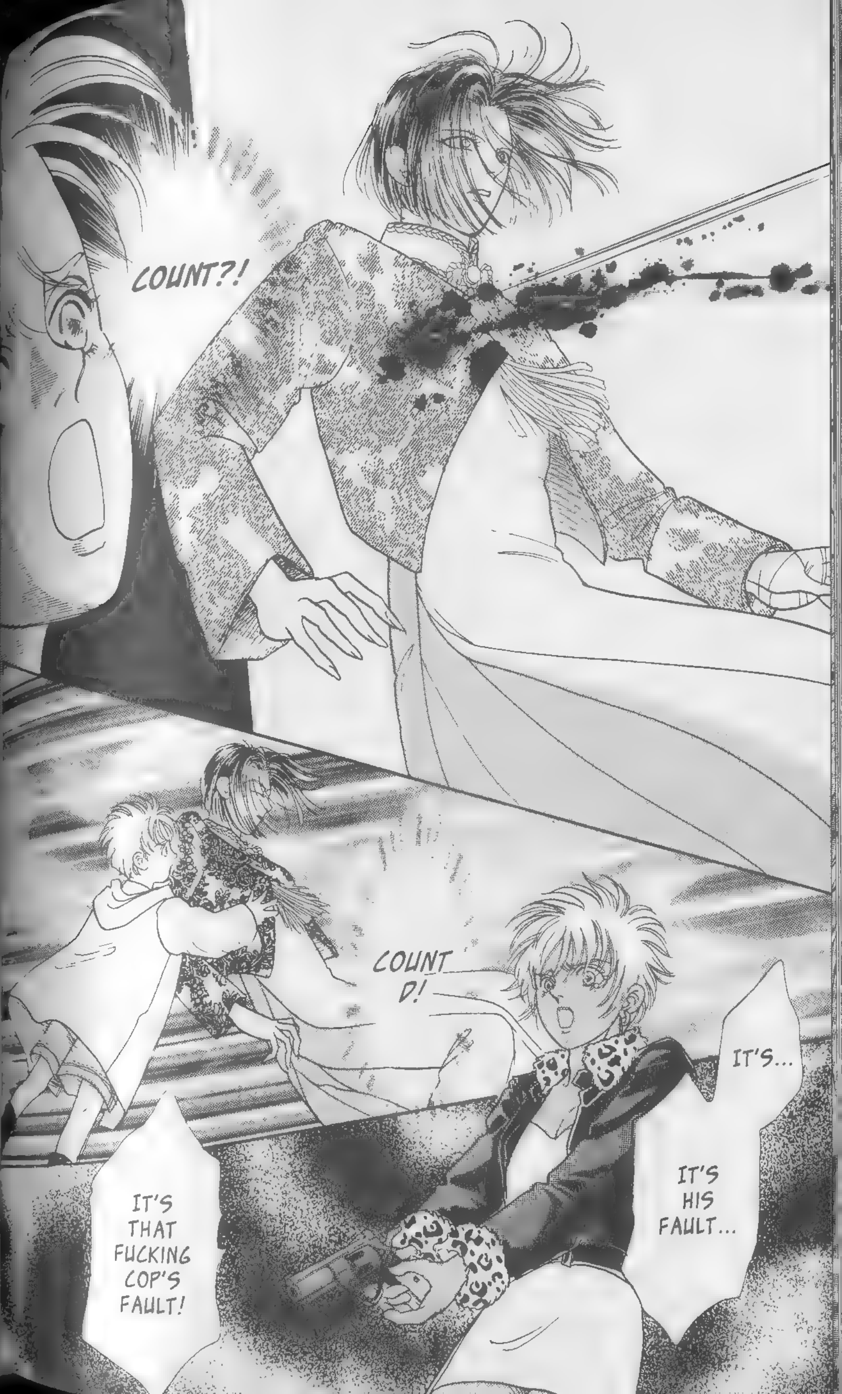

I SHOULD KNOW.
IS TH'S GIRLFRE OF SOME I'VE KILLE
I REMEMBER EVERYTHING ABOUT THE MEN I'VE KILLED.
THEIR NAMES AND HOMETOWNS...
WHICH OF THEM HAD DONE TIME BEFORE...
CHRIST, I EVEN REMEMBER THE LOOK ON THEIR FACES WHEN I PULLED THE TRIGGER.
RAY!
RAY!!
AAAAAAAH!
HE'S DEAD!
HOW COULD YOU...?
BRING THE GIRL ALONG.
ASS-HOLES! STUPID PIG ASS-HOLES! I WON'T FORGET THIS!
A MAN GIVES YOU THAT LOOK, AND YOU DON'T FORGET A DAMN THING ABOUT THEM.

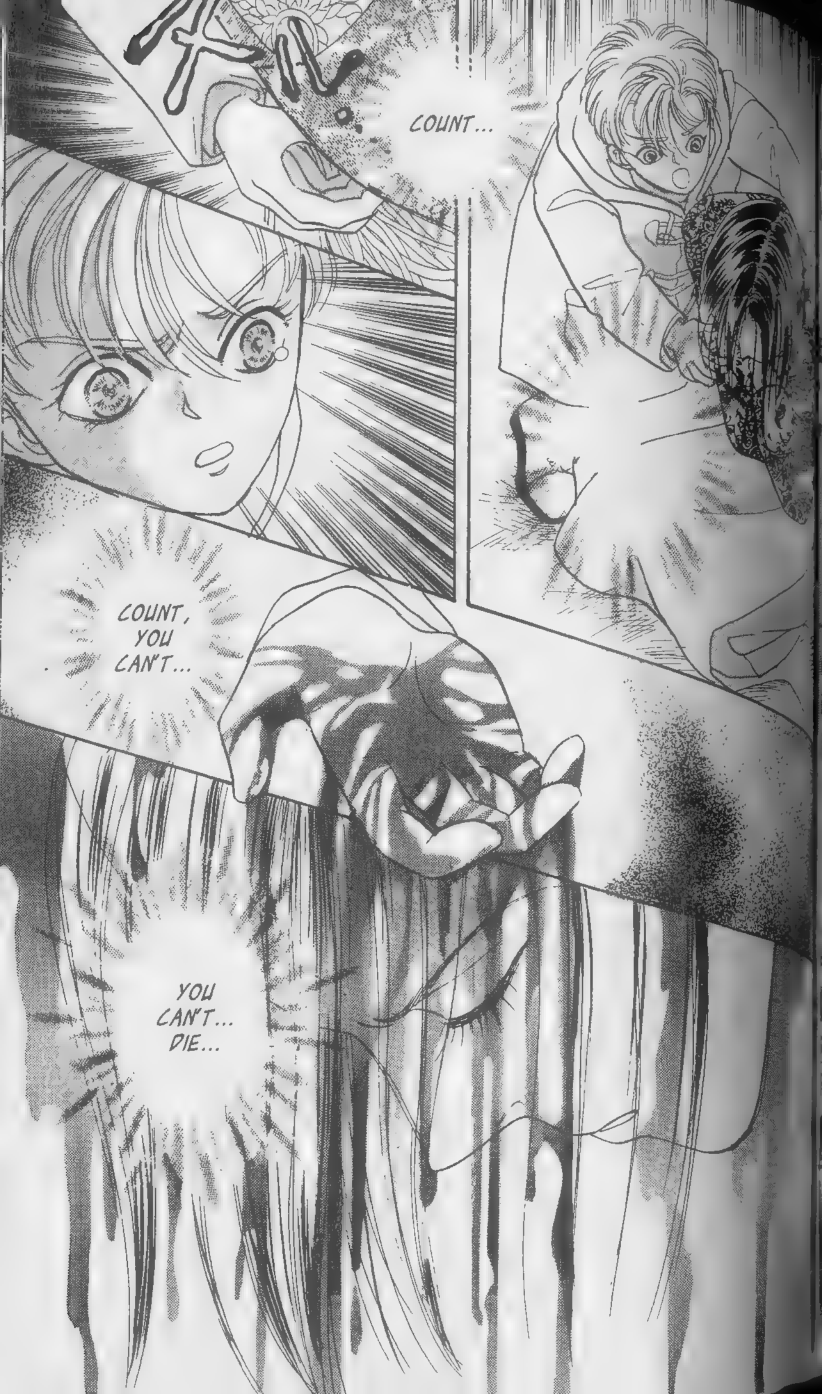

THAT WAS TWO MONTHS AGO.
SINCE THEN, I'VE THOUGHT OF NOTHING EXCEPT REVENGE.
REVENGE ON DETECTIVE LEON ORCOT!!
SO... WASN'T
SENT BY MY FATHER
HEH HEH HEH...
HEH.
COUNT?
WHAT'S SO GODDAMN FUNNY?!
HEY!
IT'S...
IT'S JUST THAT WE'RE ALL HERE...
...BECAUSE OF HIM.

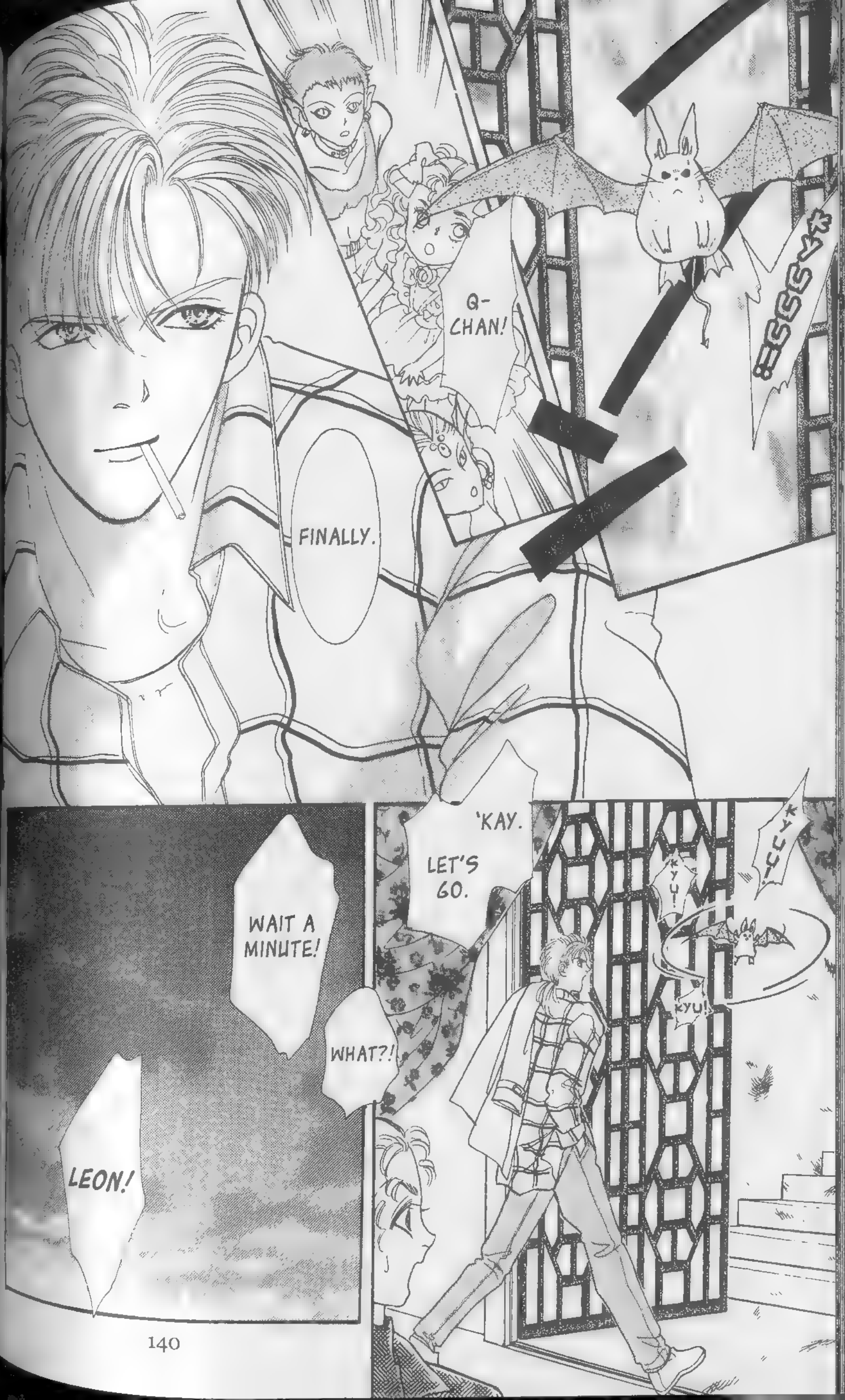

WE'RE ALL HERE--HA HA HA--BECAUSE OF THAT RECKLESS, DULL-WITTED, UNCULTURED EXCUSE FOR A DETECTIVE, LEON ORCOT? THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME, RIGHT?
YES.
THAT'S WHAT I SAID, WASN'T IT?
WELL, WHAT'S WRONG WITH BLOWING THAT DISGUSTING LOUT AWAY WITH A RIFLE OR SHOTGUN?!
......
I...
I'M GONNA GET TO THAT!
BUT BEFORE I DO...
I'M GONNA GIVE THAT SON OF A BITCH A TASTE OF WHAT IT'S LIKE...
...TO SEE SOMEONE YOU LOVE MURDERED RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU!!

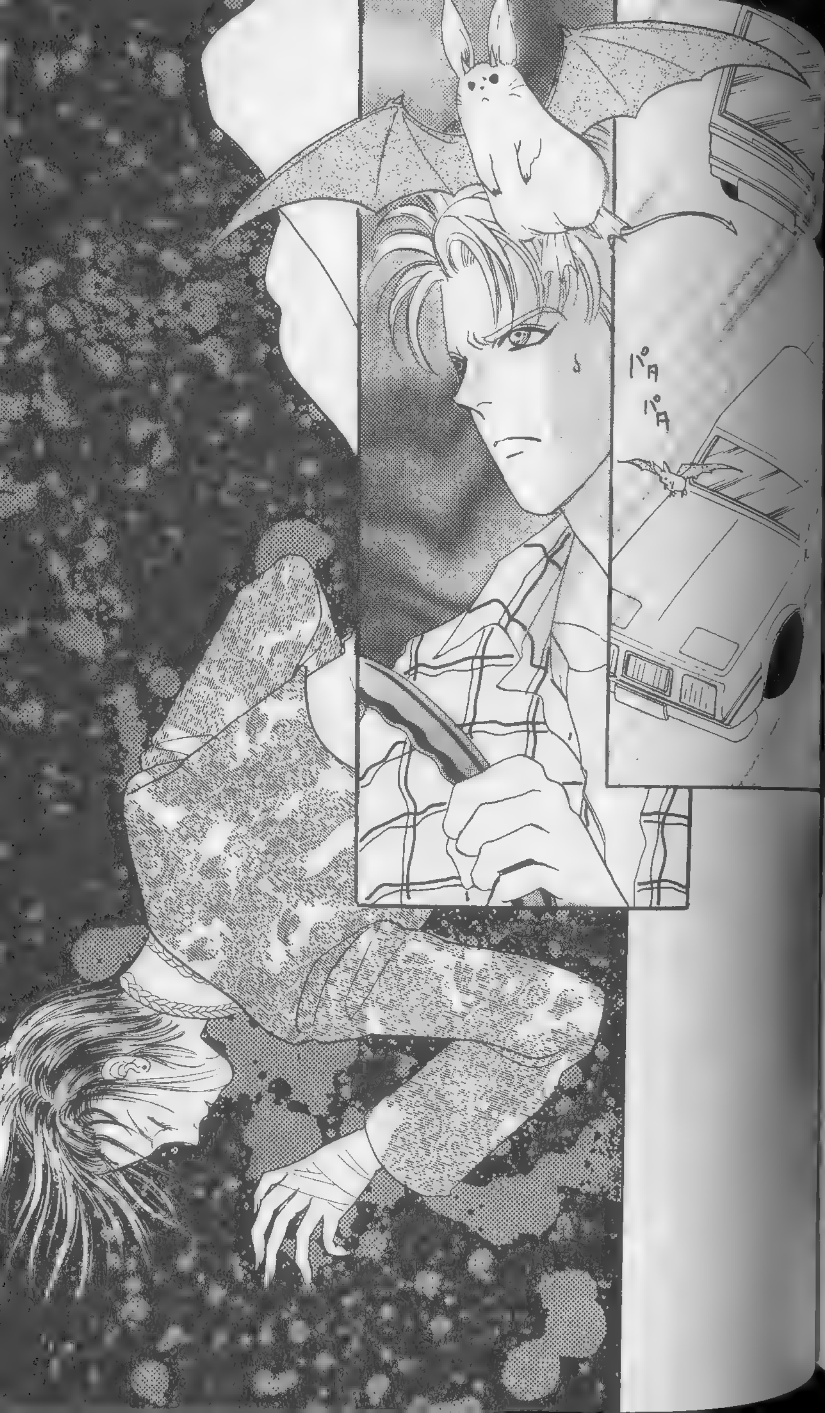

DID LEON...
...KILL SOMEONE...
...SHE CARED ABOUT?
IS MY BROTHER A MURDERER?
CHRIS...
IT'S PART OF YOUR BROTHER'S JOB.
IF HE DID KILL THIS YOUNG LADY'S FRIEND, I'M SURE IT WAS IN SELF-DEFENSE.
RAY SIMPLY LOST THE BATTLE.
AND IN CONFRONTATIONS, THE LOSER MUST OFTEN PERISH.
SUCH IS THE WAY OF THINGS IN BOTH THE ANIMAL AND HUMAN WORLDS.
HUMANS...
...ARE SIMPLY ANIMALS IN A DIFFERENT SORT OF JUNGLE.
A JUNGLE THAT IS EVERY BIT AS DANGEROUS AS THE AMAZON.


LOOK, MY RAY WAS NOT A SAINT
HE WAS A MURDERER AND A THIEF.
BUT...
...HE WAS ALSO...
...THE ONLY PERSON ON THIS MISERABLE FUCKING PLANET WHO WAS NICE TO ME!
BUT DOES RAY'S DEATH JUSTIFY LASHING OUT AT INNOCENT PEOPLE? DOES IT GIVE YOU LICENSE TO KILL? AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH...
WHAT WILL KILLING US REALLY ACCOMPLISH? IT WON'T BRING RAY BACK.
SH-SHUT UP...
I SAID SHUT UP!!


COUNT?!
COUNT D!
IT'S...
IT'S HIS FAULT...
IT'S THAT FUCKING COP'S FAULT!


COUNT...
COUNT, YOU CAN'T...
YOU CAN'T... DIE...


キュウウウ!!
Q-CHAN!
FINALLY.
'KAY.
LET'S GO.
KYU!
KYUー
KYU!
WAIT A MINUTE!
WHAT?!
LEON!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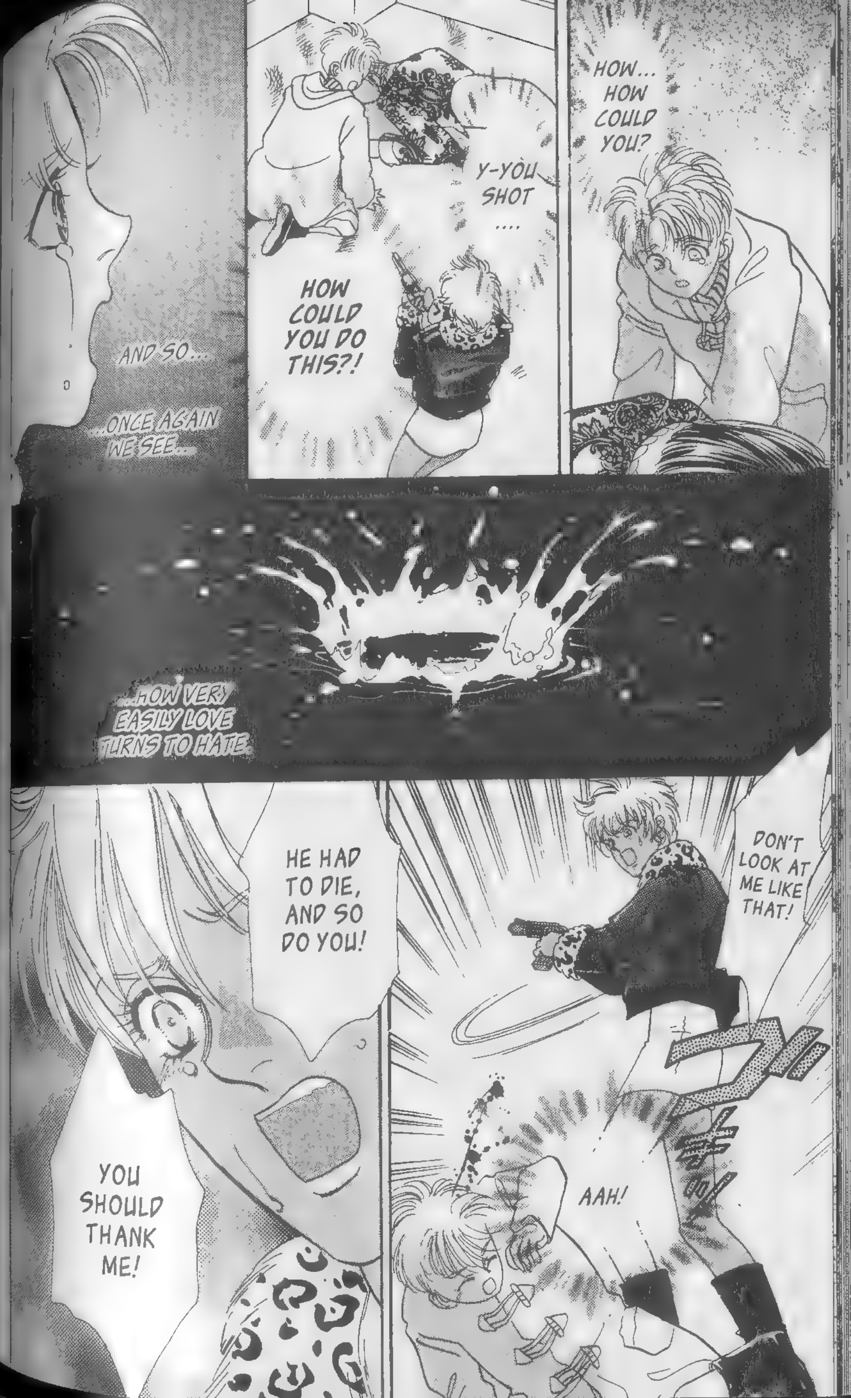
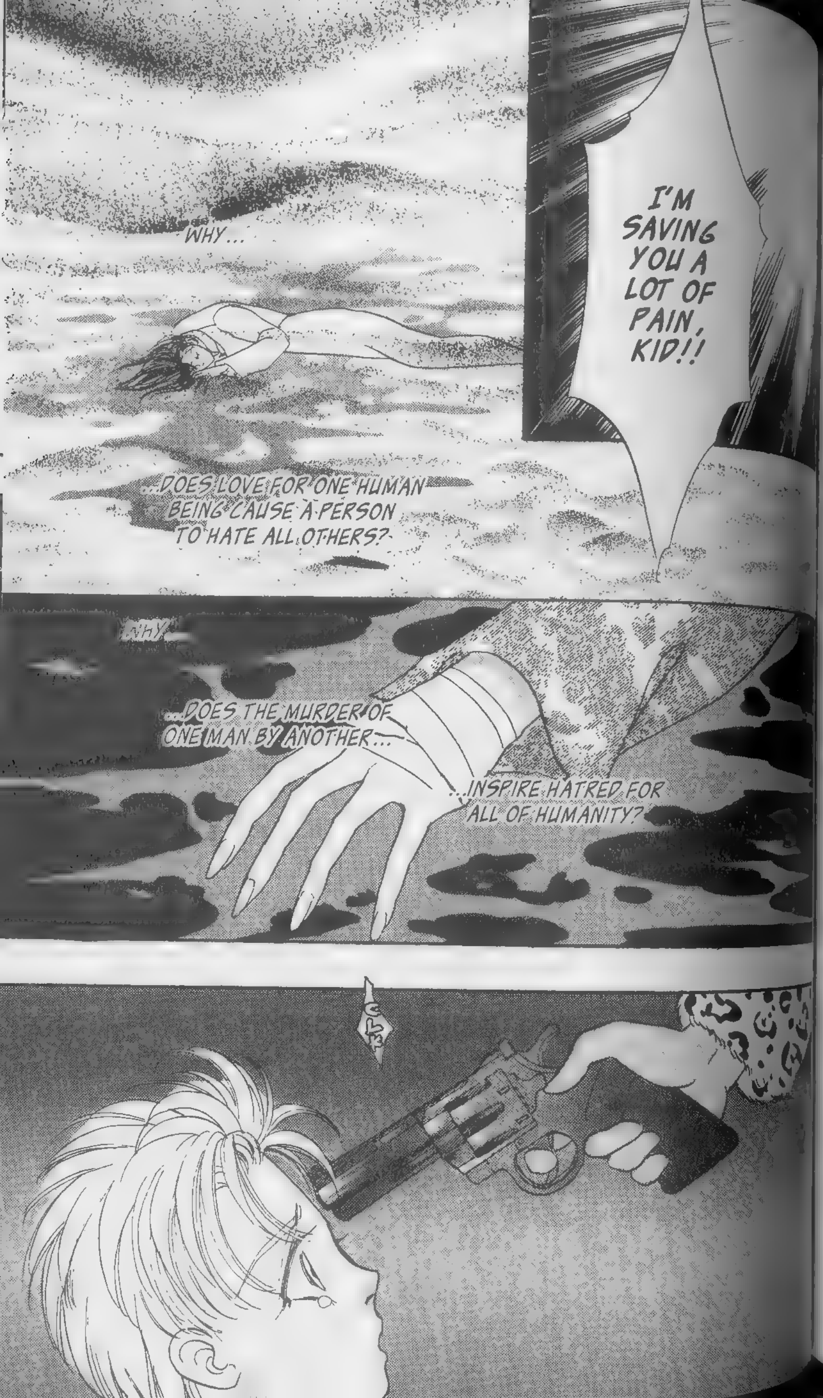
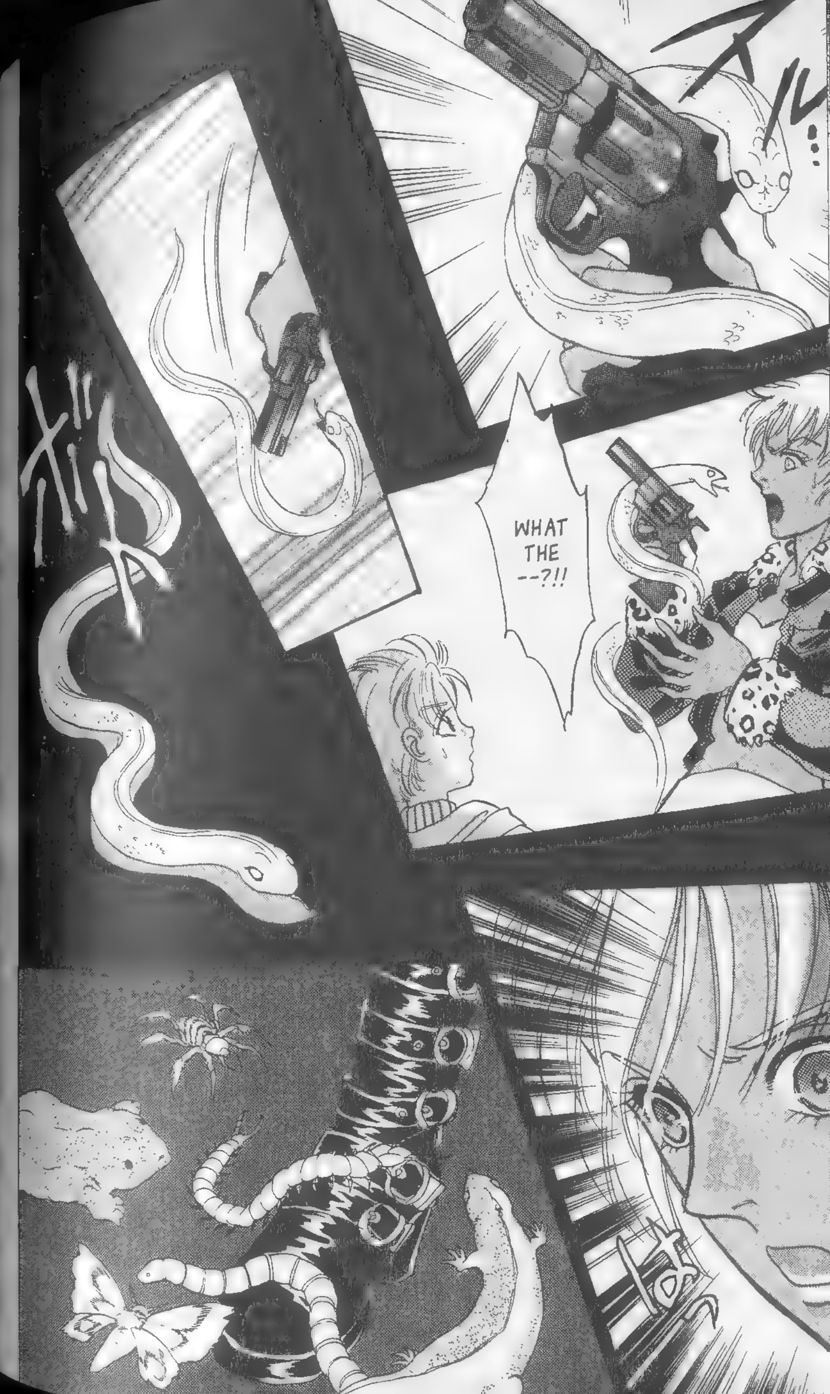
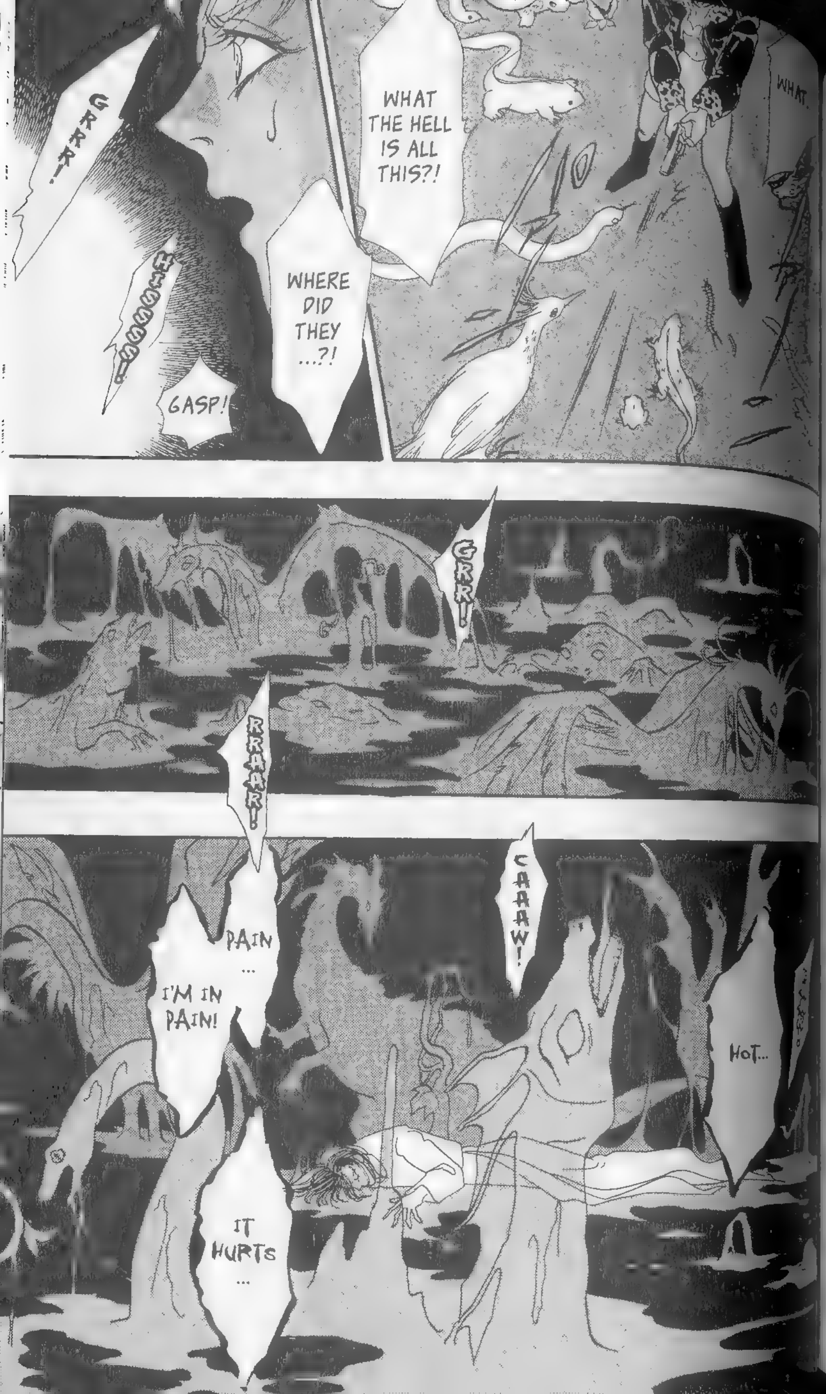
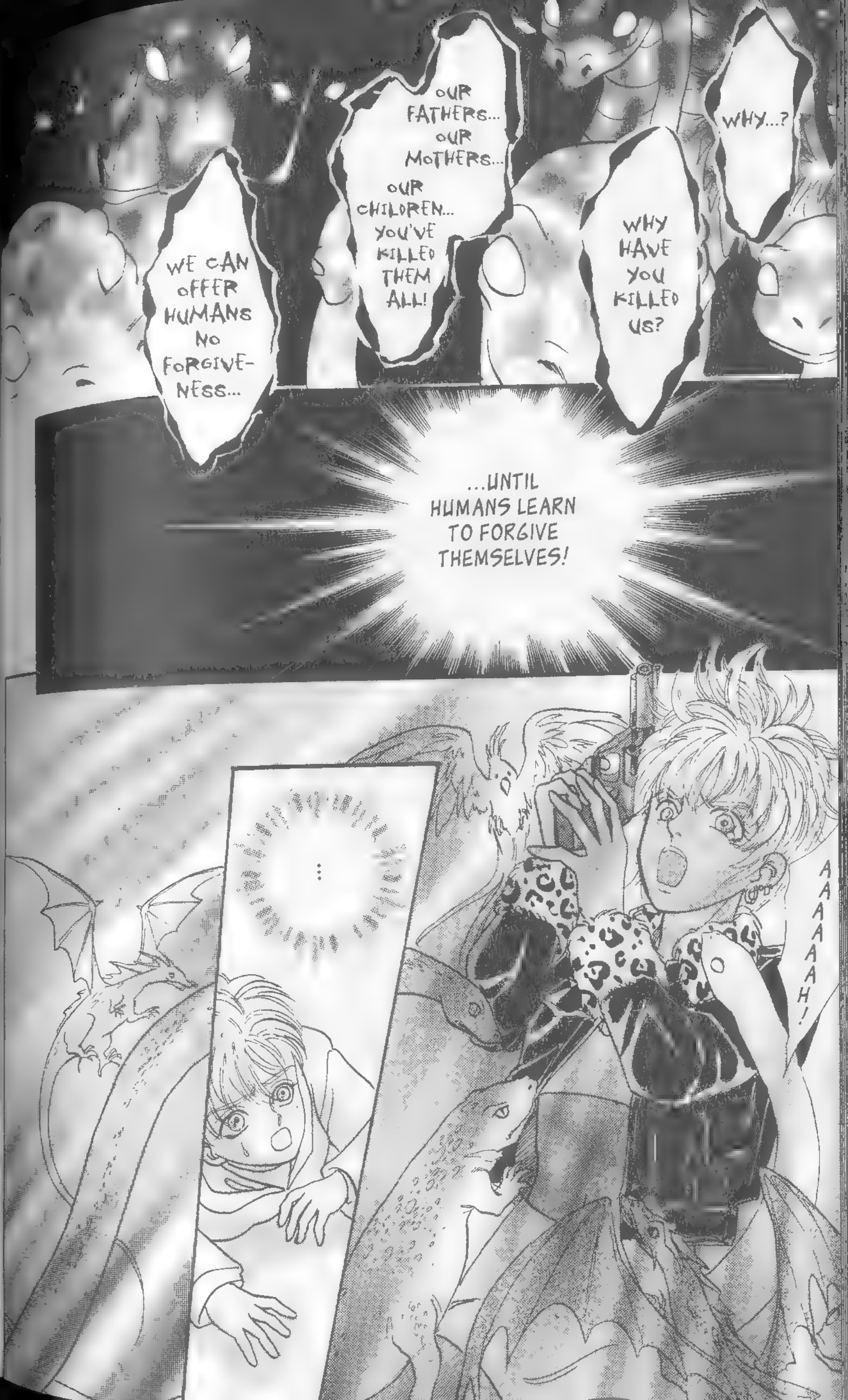
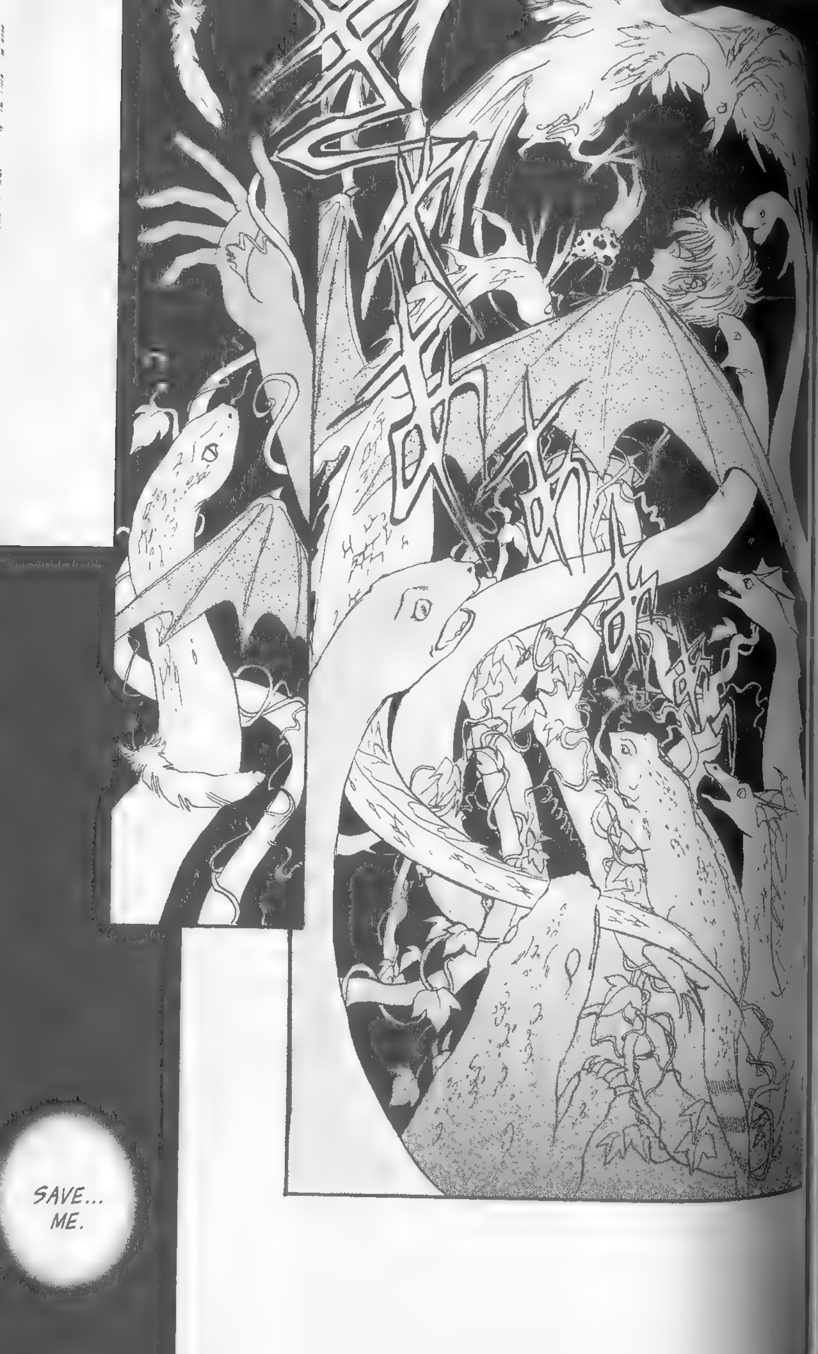

HOW... HOW COULD YOU?
Y-YOU SHOT ....
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS?!
AND SO...
...ONCE AGAIN WE SEE...
...HOW VERY EASILY LOVE TURNS TO HATE.
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!
AAH!
HE HAD TO DIE, AND SO DO YOU!
YOU SHOULD THANK ME!

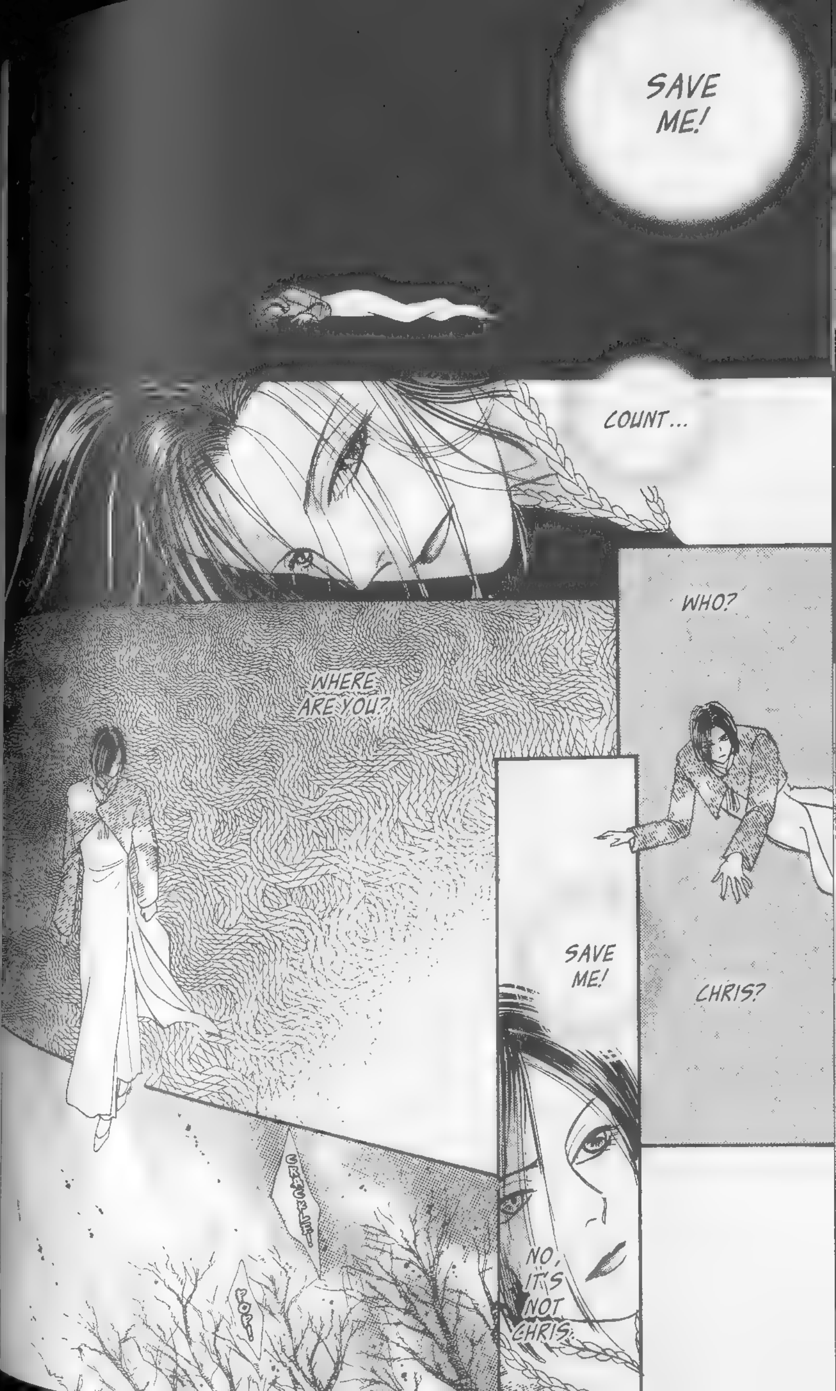

I'M SAVING YOU A LOT OF PAIN, KID!!
WHY...
...DOES LOVE FOR ONE HUMAN BEING CAUSE A PERSON TO HATE ALL OTHERS?
WHY...
...DOES THE MURDER OF ONE MAN BY ANOTHER...
...INSPIRE HATRED FOR ALL OF HUMANITY?

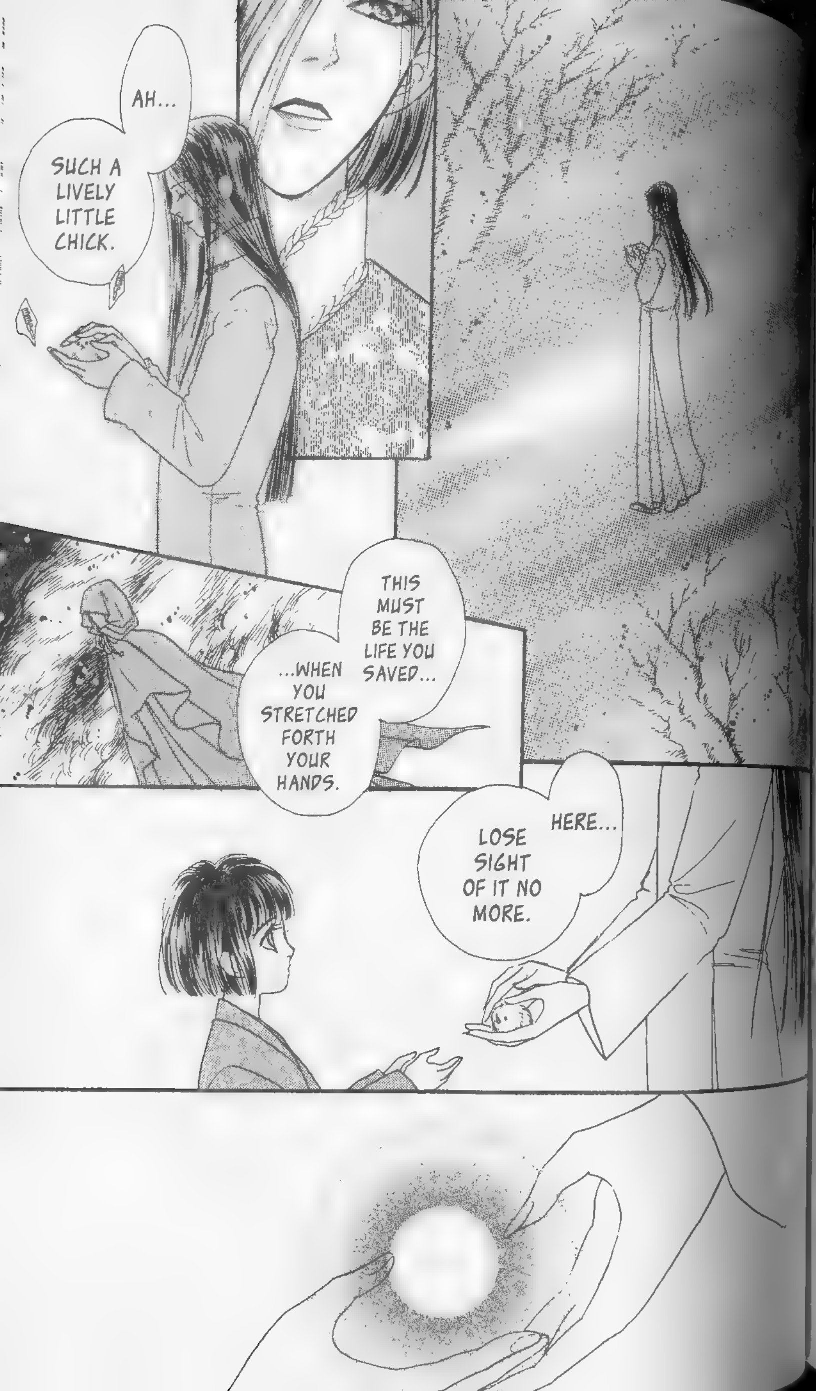

WHAT THE --?!!

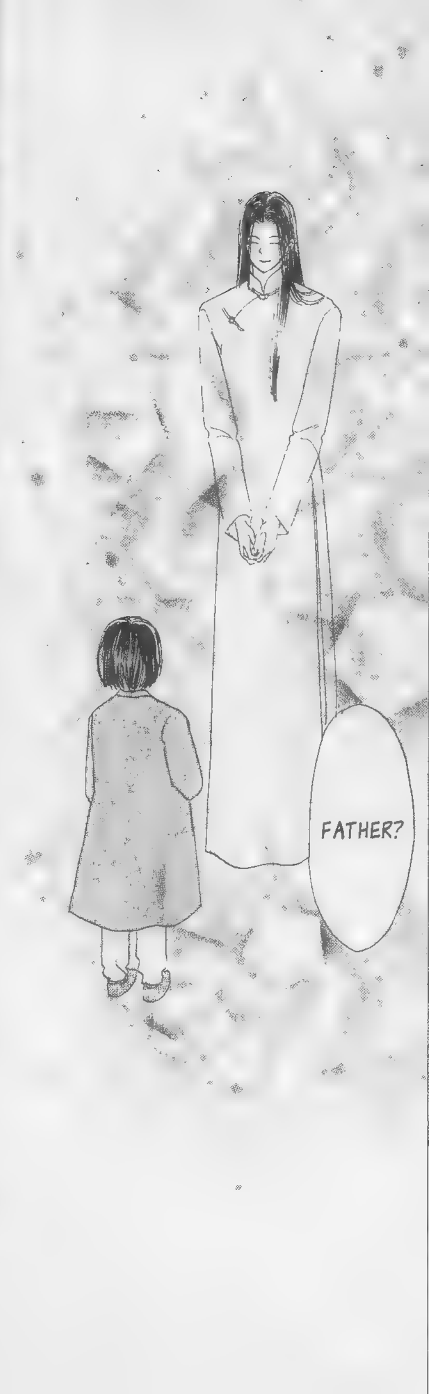

WHAT.
WHAT THE HELL IS ALL THIS?!
WHERE DID THEY ...?!
GRRR!
HISSSSS!
GASP!
GRRR!
RRAAR!
CAAAW!
HOT...
PAIN ... I'M IN PAIN!
IT HURTS ...

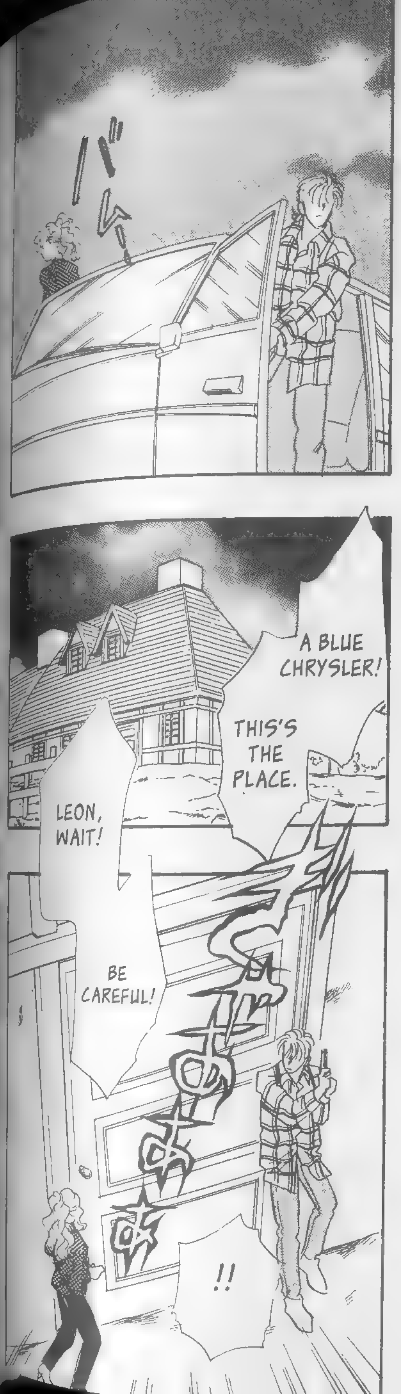

WHY...?
WHY HAVE YOU KILLED US?
OUR FATHERS... OUR MOTHERS... OUR CHILDREN... YOU'VE KILLED THEM ALL!
WE CAN OFFER HUMANS NO FORGIVENESS...
...UNTIL HUMANS LEARN TO FORGIVE THEMSELVES!
AAAAAAAH!
...

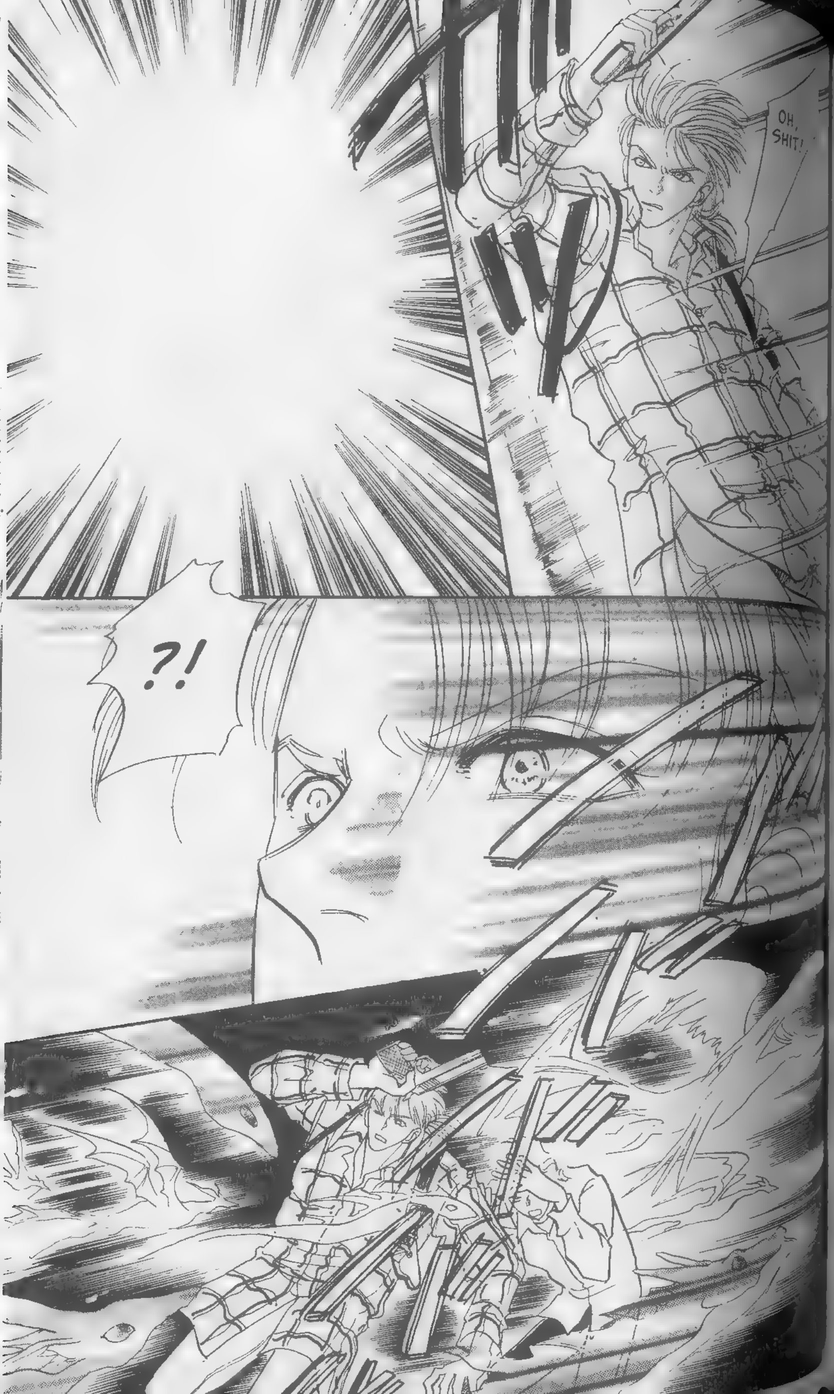

SAVE... ME.

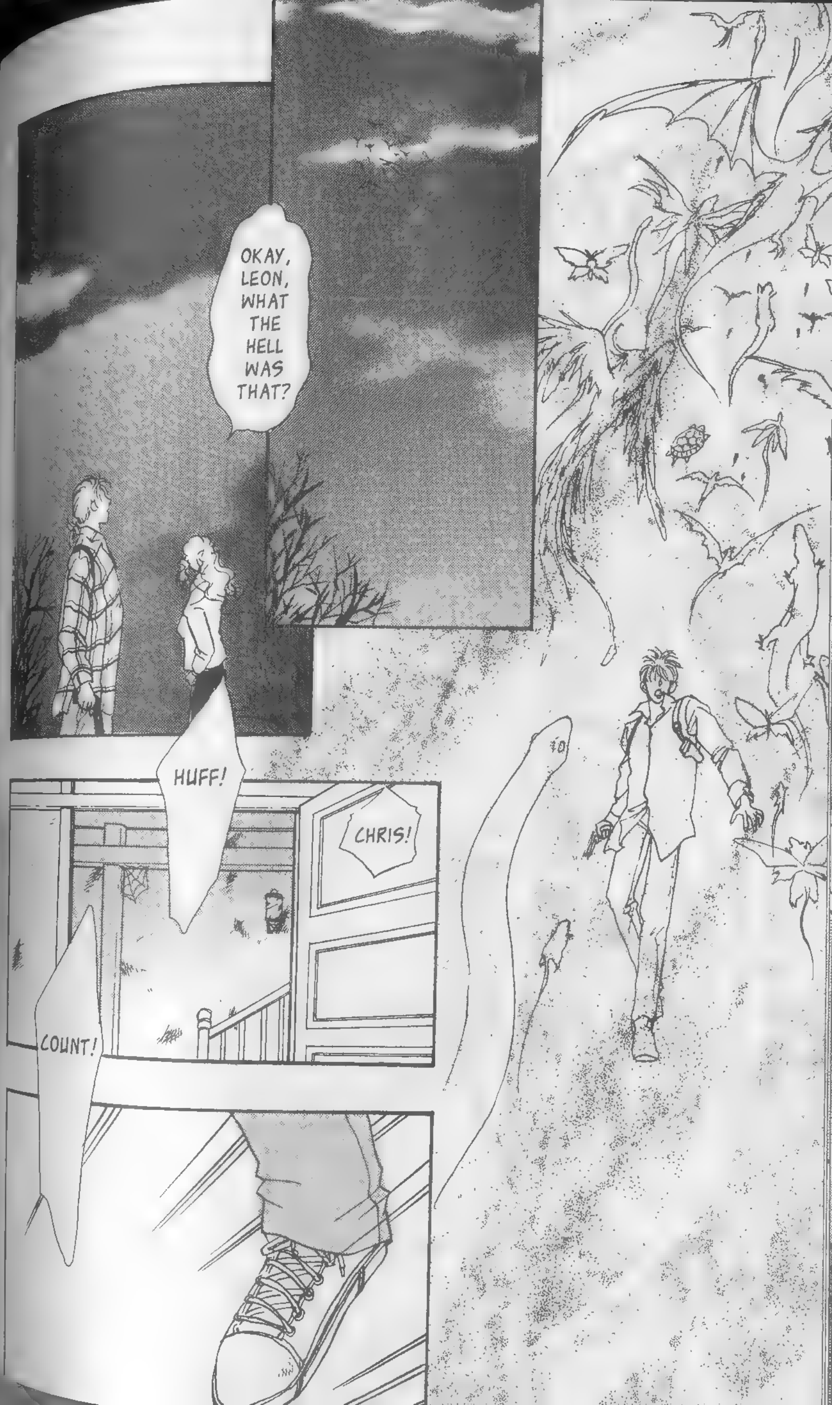

SAVE ME!
COUNT...
WHO?
WHERE ARE YOU?
CHRIS?
SAVE ME!
NO, IT'S NOT CHRIS.
CRACKLE
POP!

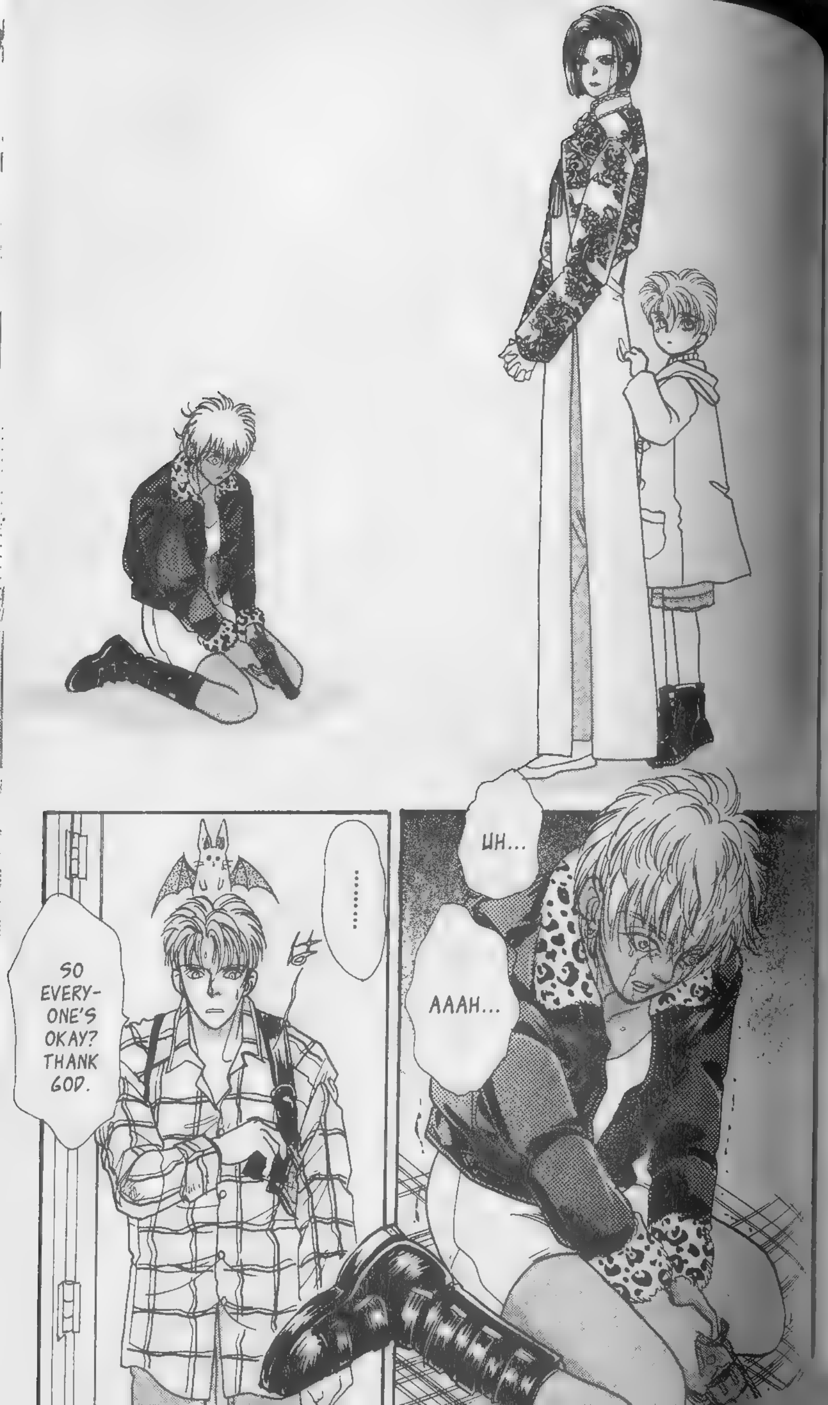

AH...
SUCH A LIVELY LITTLE CHICK.
THIS MUST BE THE LIFE YOU SAVED...
...WHEN YOU STRETCHED FORTH YOUR HANDS.
HERE...
LOSE SIGHT OF IT NO MORE.

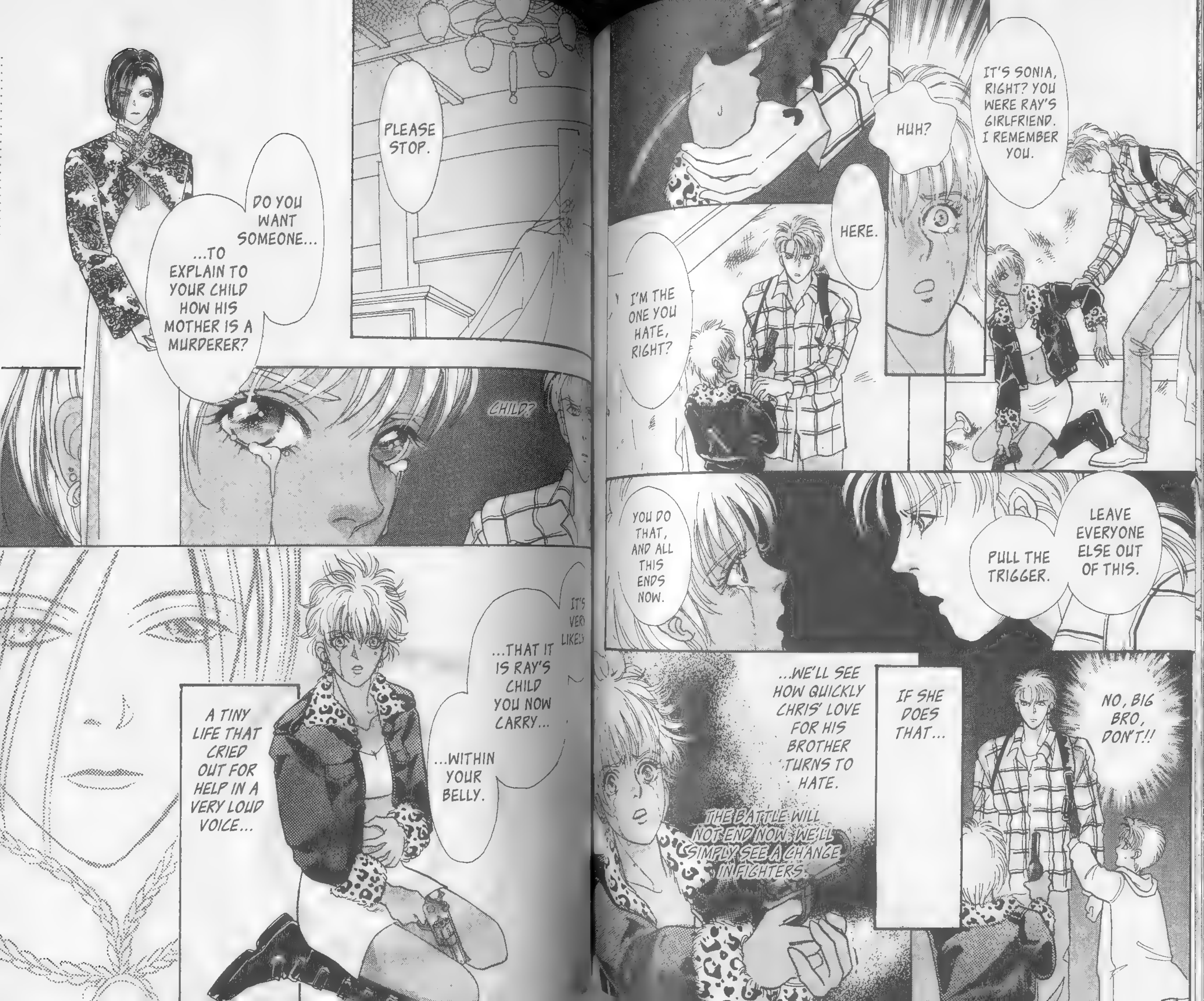

FATHER?

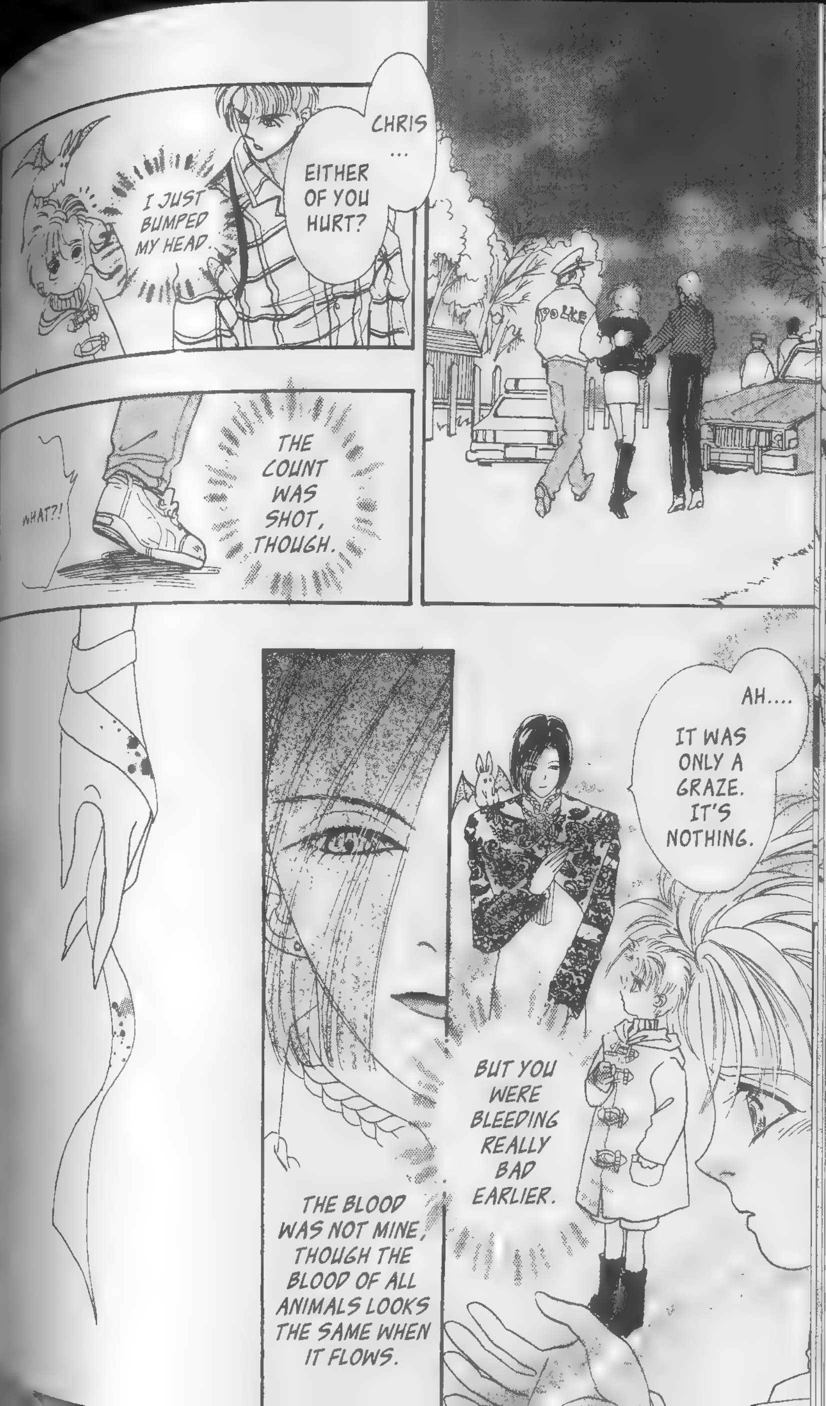

A BLUE CHRYSLER!
THIS'S THE PLACE.
LEON, WAIT!
BE CAREFUL!
!!

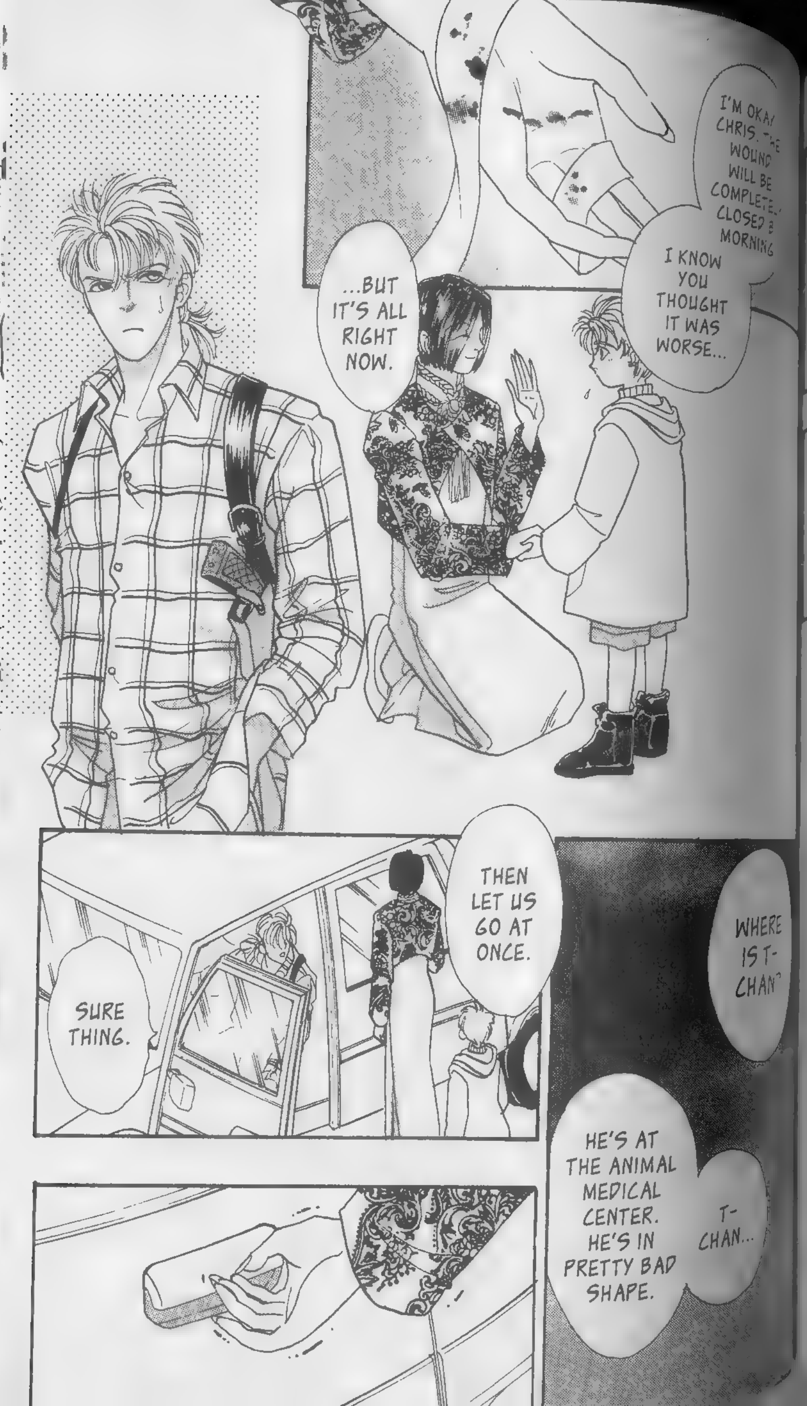

OH, SHIT!
?!

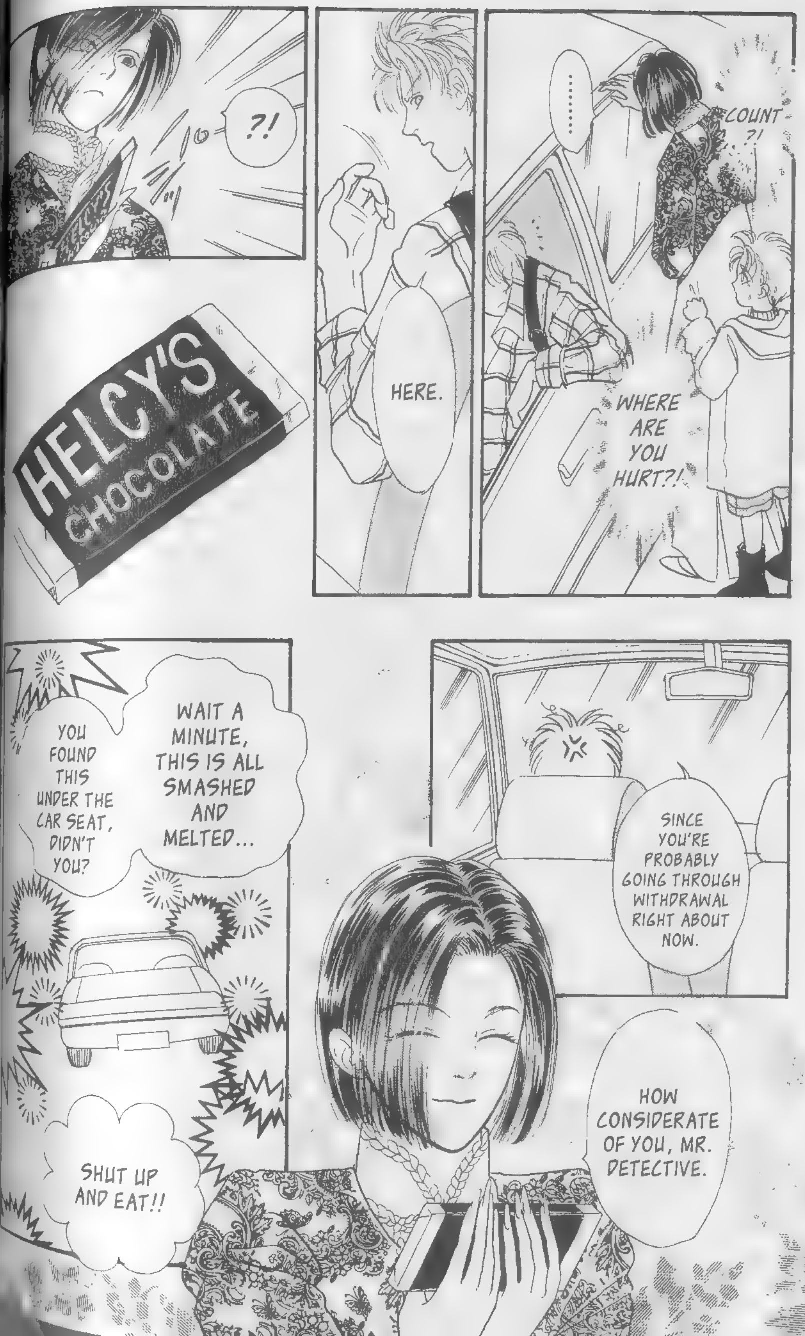

OKAY, LEON, WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
HUFF!
CHRIS!
COUNT!

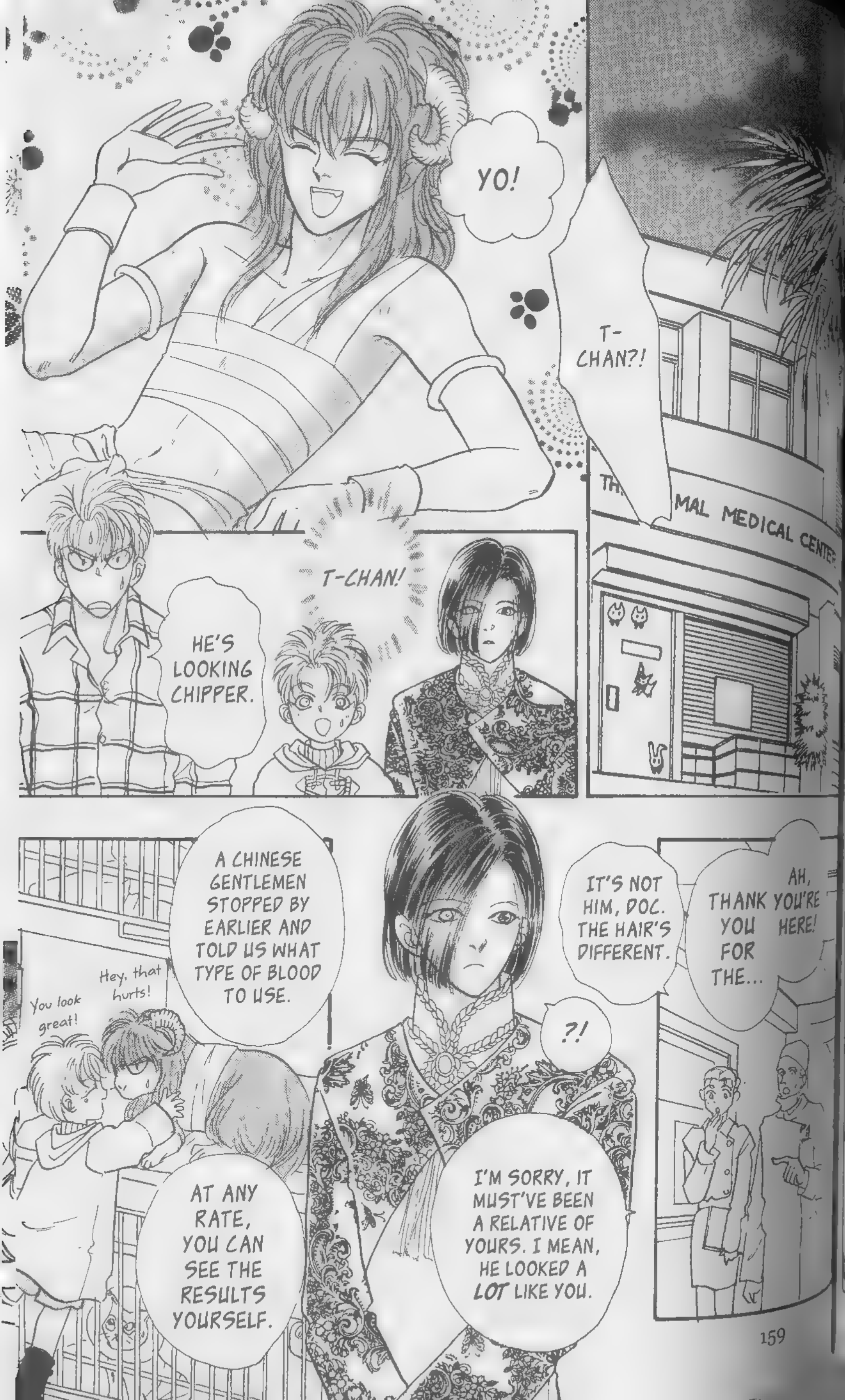

UH...
AAAH...
....
SO EVERYONE'S OKAY? THANK GOD.

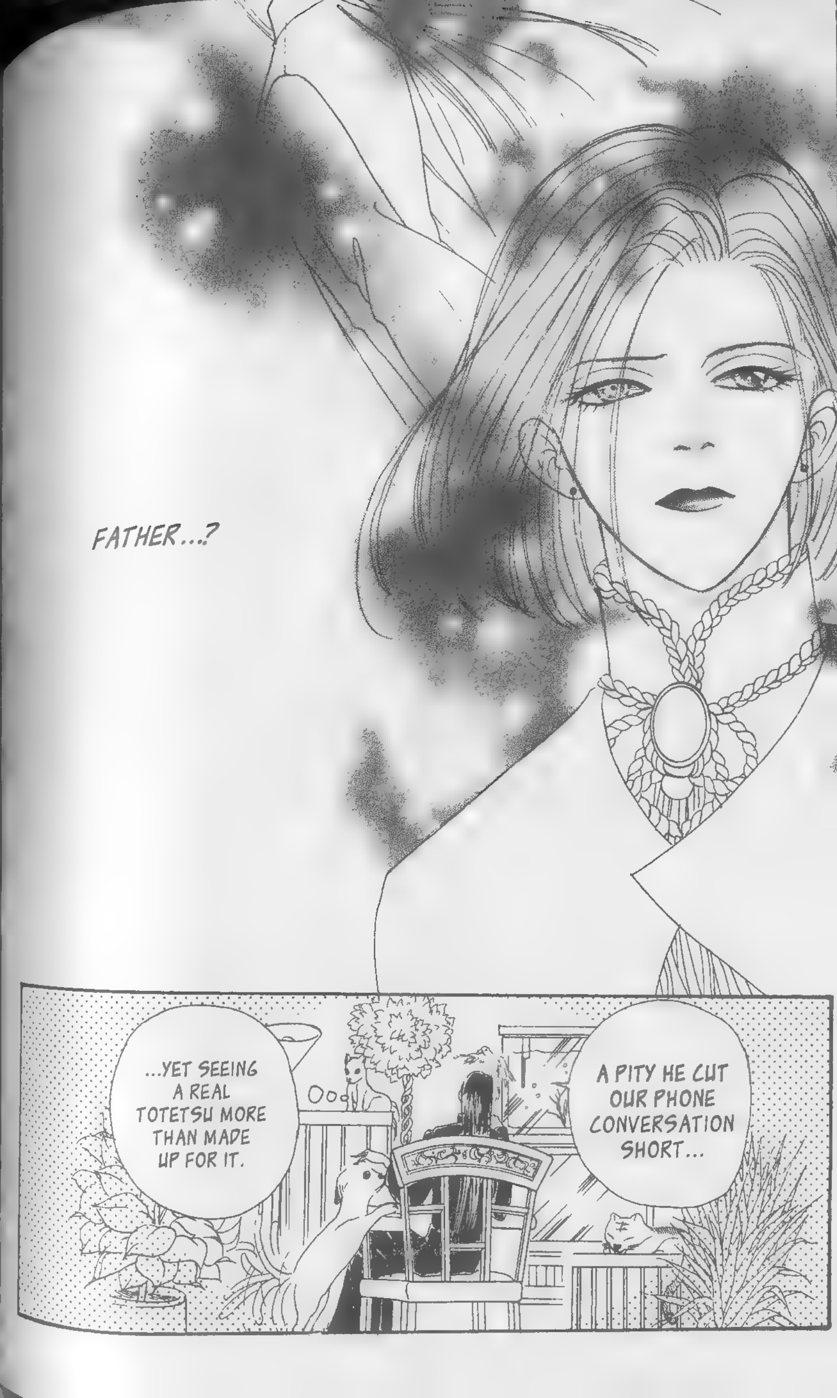

IT'S SONIA, RIGHT? YOU WERE RAY'S GIRLFRIEND. I REMEMBER YOU.
HUH?
HERE.
I'M THE ONE YOU HATE, RIGHT?
LEAVE EVERYONE ELSE OUT OF THIS.
PULL THE TRIGGER.
YOU DO THAT, AND ALL THIS ENDS NOW.
NO, BIG BRO, DON'T!!
IF SHE DOES THAT...
...WE'LL SEE HOW QUICKLY CHRIS' LOVE FOR HIS BROTHER TURNS TO HATE.
THE BATTLE WILL NOT END NOW. WE'LL SIMPLY SEE A CHANGE IN FIGHTERS.
PLEASE STOP.
DO YOU WANT SOMEONE...
...TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD HOW HIS MOTHER IS A MURDERER?
CHILD?
IT'S VERY LIKELY
...THAT IT IS RAY'S CHILD YOU NOW CARRY...
...WITHIN YOUR BELLY.
A TINY LIFE THAT CRIED OUT FOR HELP IN A VERY LOUD VOICE...

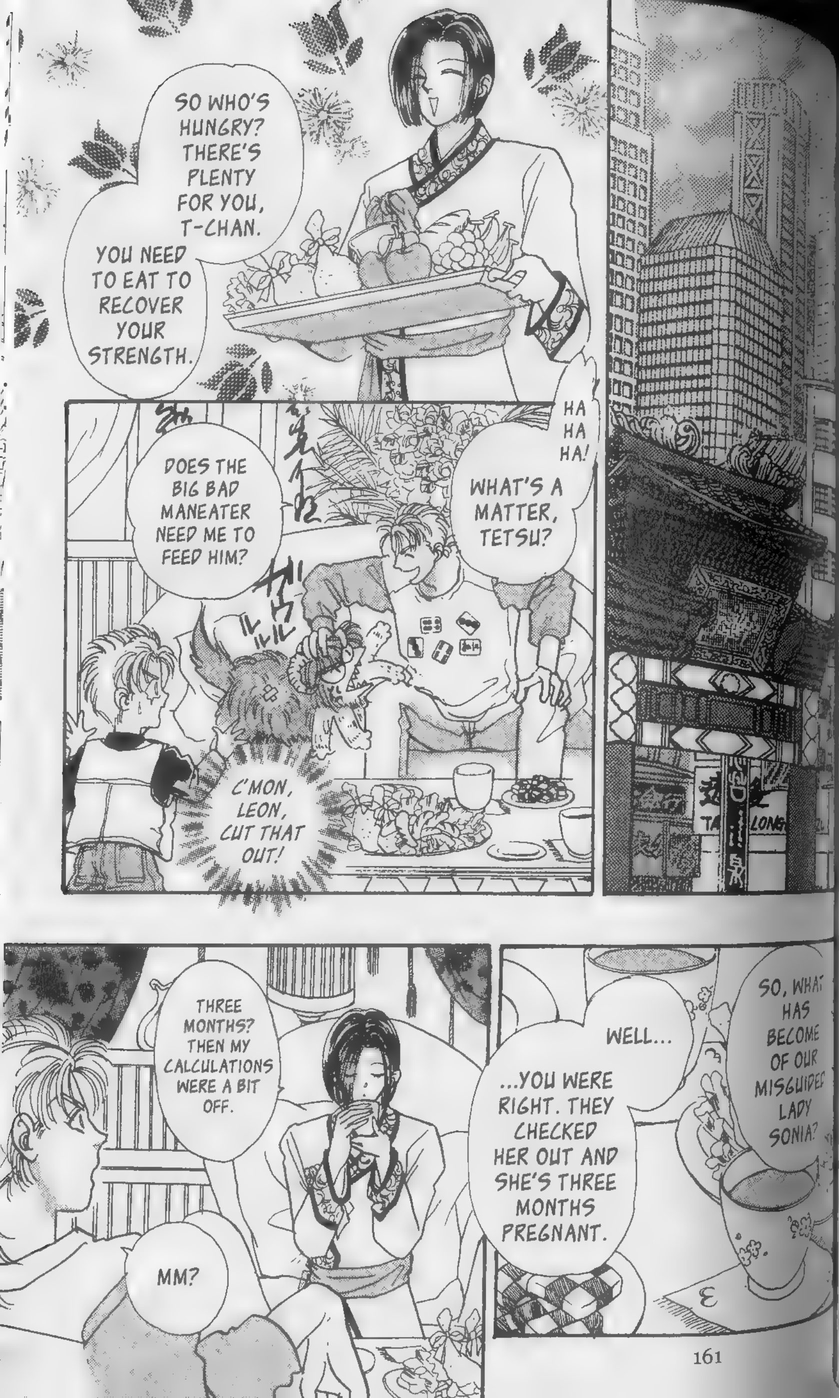

CHRIS ...
EITHER OF YOU HURT?
I JUST BUMPED MY HEAD.
THE COUNT WAS SHOT, THOUGH.
WHAT?!
AH.... IT WAS ONLY A GRAZE. IT'S NOTHING.
BUT YOU WERE BLEEDING REALLY BAD EARLIER.
THE BLOOD WAS NOT MINE, THOUGH THE BLOOD OF ALL ANIMALS LOOKS THE SAME WHEN IT FLOWS.

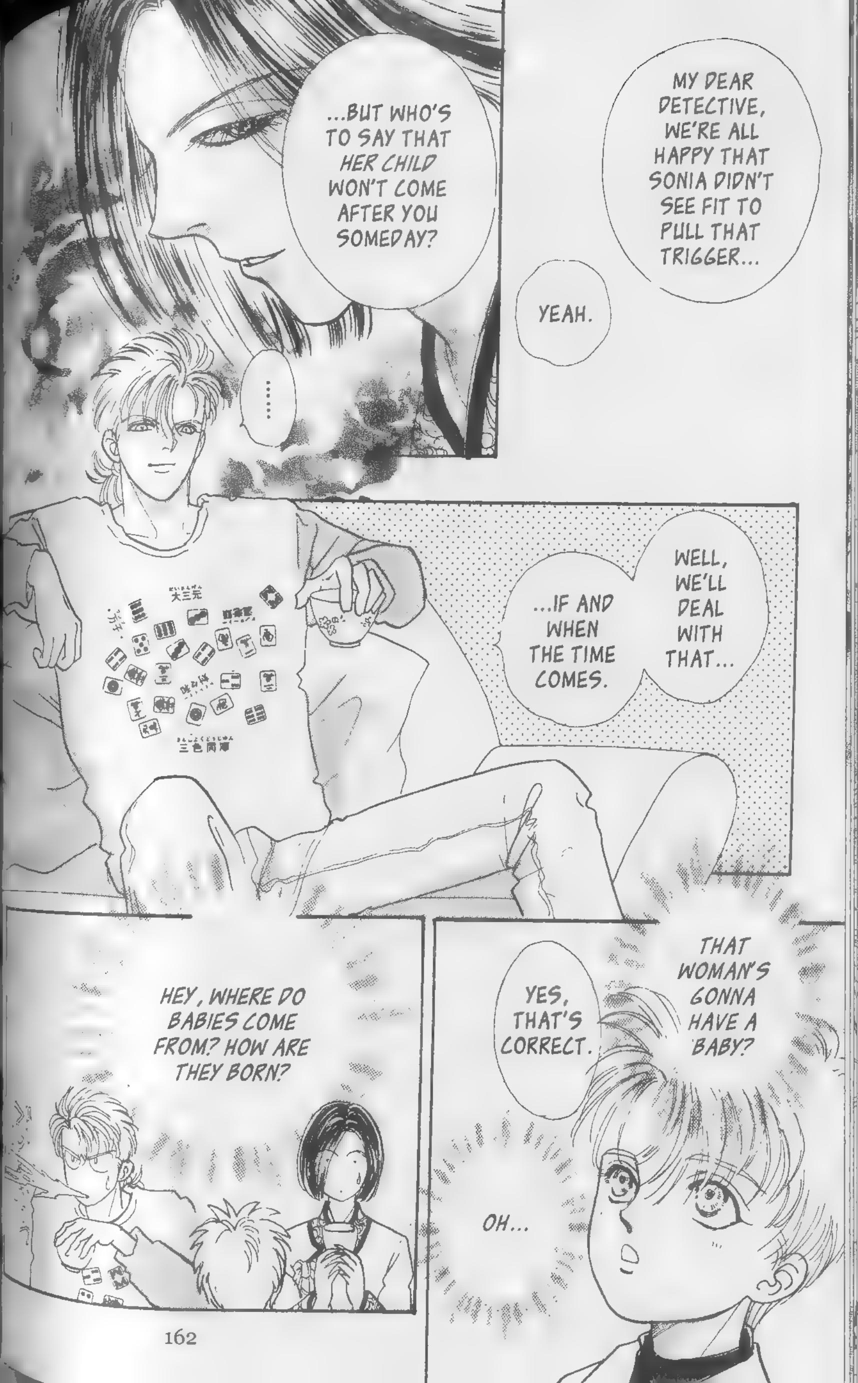

I'M OKAY CHRIS. THE WOUND WILL BE COMPLETE CLOSED B MORNING
I KNOW YOU THOUGHT IT WAS WORSE...
...BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
WHERE IS T-CHAN
HE'S AT THE ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER. HE'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE.
T-CHAN...
THEN LET US GO AT ONCE.
SURE THING.

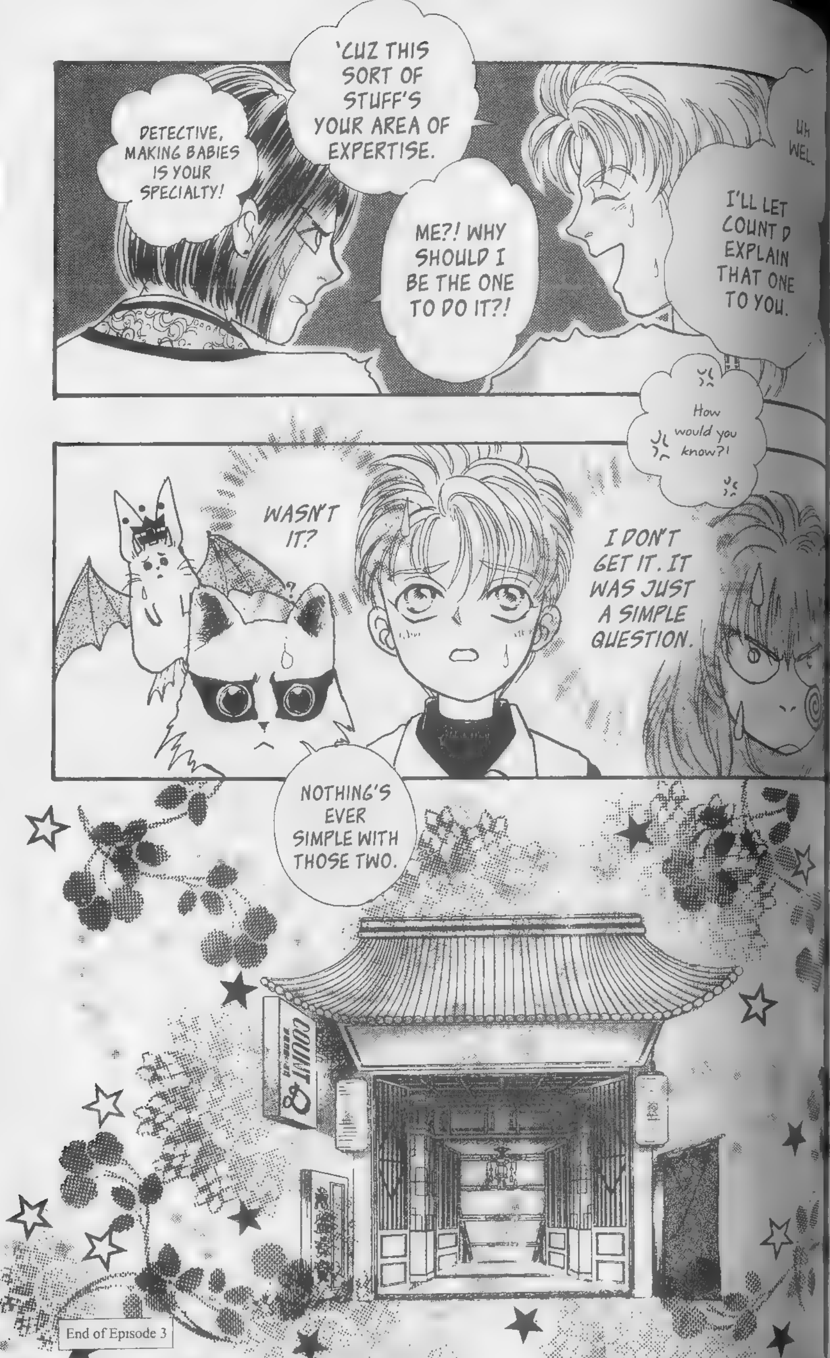

COUNT?!
WHERE ARE YOU HURT?!
......
HERE.
?!
HELCY'S CHOCOLATE
SINCE YOU'RE PROBABLY GOING THROUGH WITHDRAWAL RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
HOW CONSIDERATE OF YOU, MR. DETECTIVE.
WAIT A MINUTE, THIS IS ALL SMASHED AND MELTED...
YOU FOUND THIS UNDER THE CAR SEAT, DIDN'T YOU?
SHUT UP AND EAT!!


TH MAL MEDICAL CENTE
T-CHAN?!
YO!
T-CHAN!
HE'S LOOKING CHIPPER.
AH, YOU'RE HERE! THANK YOU FOR THE...
IT'S NOT HIM, DOC. THE HAIR'S DIFFERENT.
?!
I'M SORRY, IT MUST'VE BEEN A RELATIVE OF YOURS. I MEAN, HE LOOKED A LOT LIKE YOU.
A CHINESE GENTLEMEN STOPPED BY EARLIER AND TOLD US WHAT TYPE OF BLOOD TO USE.
Hey, that hurts!
You look great!
AT ANY RATE, YOU CAN SEE THE RESULTS YOURSELF.


FATHER...?
A PITY HE CUT OUR PHONE CONVERSATION SHORT...
...YET SEEING A REAL TOTETSU MORE THAN MADE UP FOR IT.

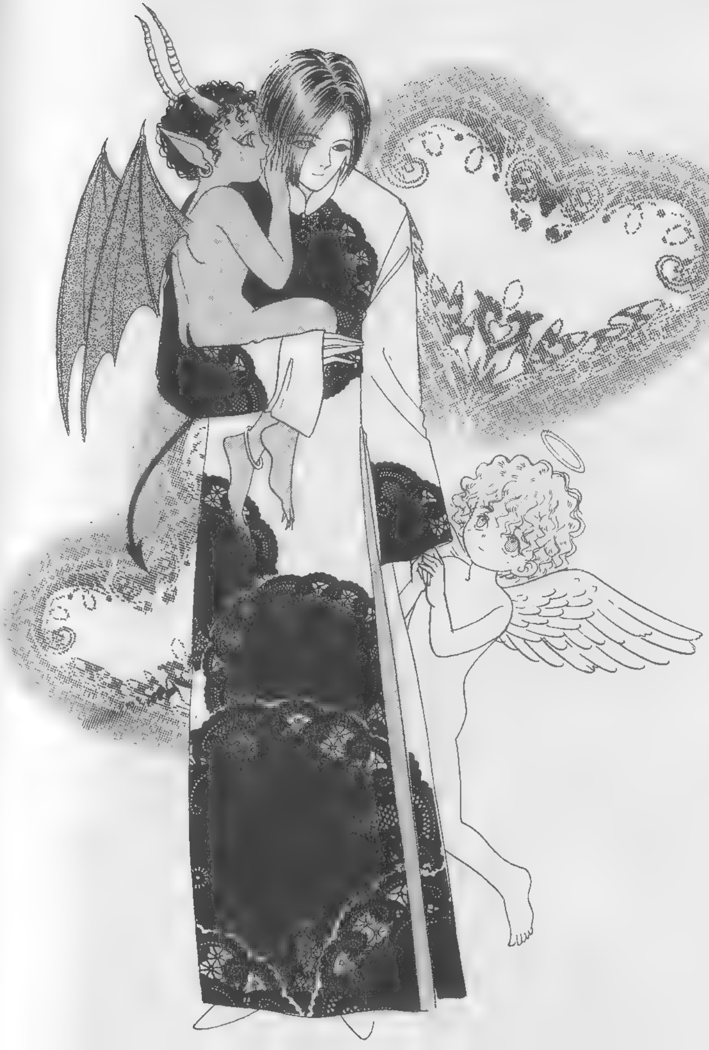

TAI LONG
SO WHO'S HUNGRY? THERE'S PLENTY FOR YOU, T-CHAN.
YOU NEED TO EAT TO RECOVER YOUR STRENGTH.
HA HA HA!
WHAT'S A MATTER, TETSU?
DOES THE BIG BAD MANEATER NEED ME TO FEED HIM?
C'MON, LEON, CUT THAT OUT!
SO, WHAT HAS BECOME OF OUR MISGUIDED LADY SONIA?
WELL...
...YOU WERE RIGHT. THEY CHECKED HER OUT AND SHE'S THREE MONTHS PREGNANT.
THREE MONTHS? THEN MY CALCULATIONS WERE A BIT OFF.
MM?

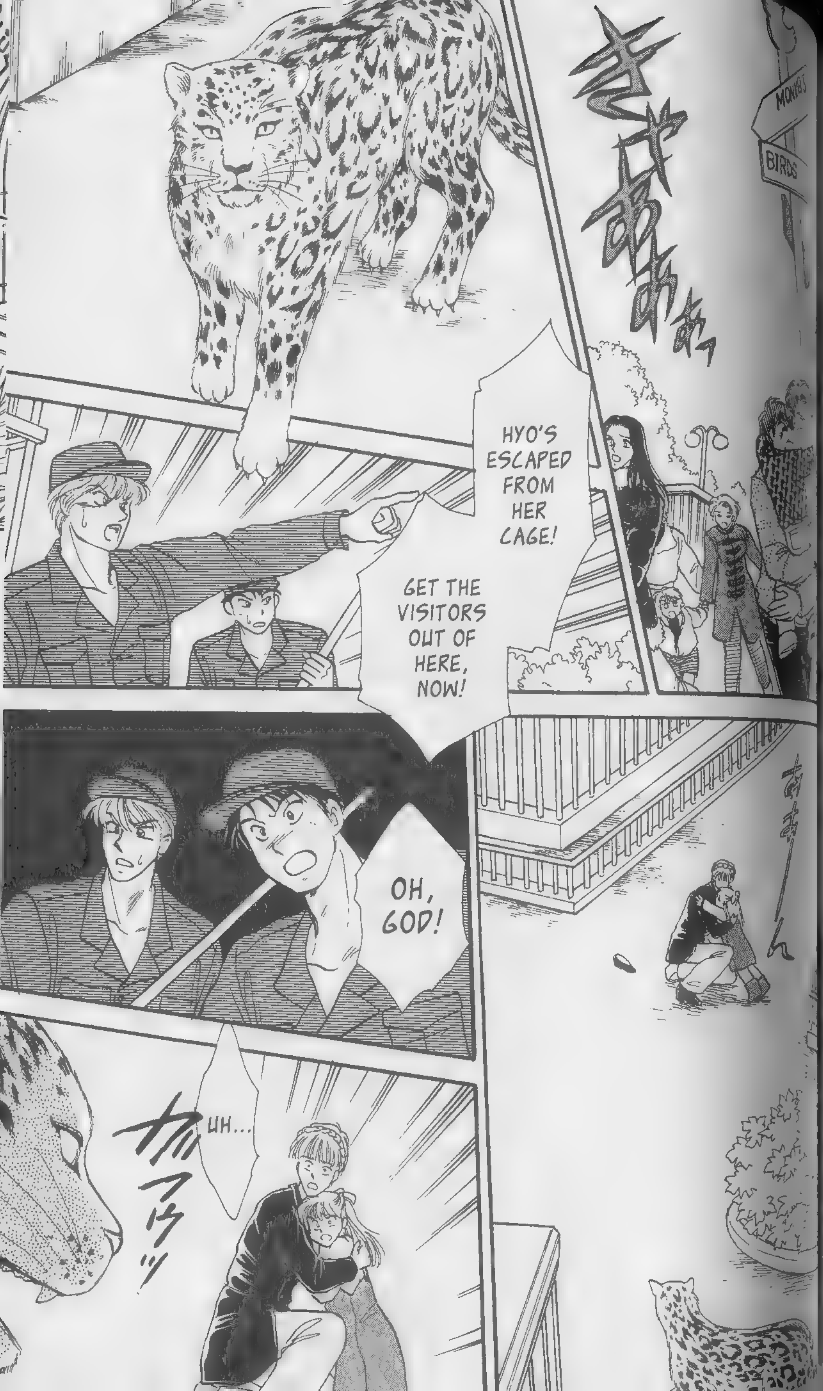

MY DEAR DETECTIVE, WE'RE ALL HAPPY THAT SONIA DIDN'T SEE FIT TO PULL THAT TRIGGER...
...BUT WHO'S TO SAY THAT HER CHILD WON'T COME AFTER YOU SOMEDAY?
YEAH.
......
WELL, WE'LL DEAL WITH THAT...
...IF AND WHEN THE TIME COMES.
大三元
三色同順
THAT WOMAN'S GONNA HAVE A BABY?
YES, THAT'S CORRECT.
OH...
HEY, WHERE DO BABIES COME FROM? HOW ARE THEY BORN?


UH WELL
I'LL LET COUNT D EXPLAIN THAT ONE TO YOU.
ME?! WHY SHOULD I BE THE ONE TO DO IT?!
'CUZ THIS SORT OF STUFF'S YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE.
DETECTIVE, MAKING BABIES IS YOUR SPECIALTY!
How would you know?!
I DON'T GET IT. IT WAS JUST A SIMPLE QUESTION.
WASN'T IT?
NOTHING'S EVER SIMPLE WITH THOSE TWO.
COUNT D

End of Episode 3

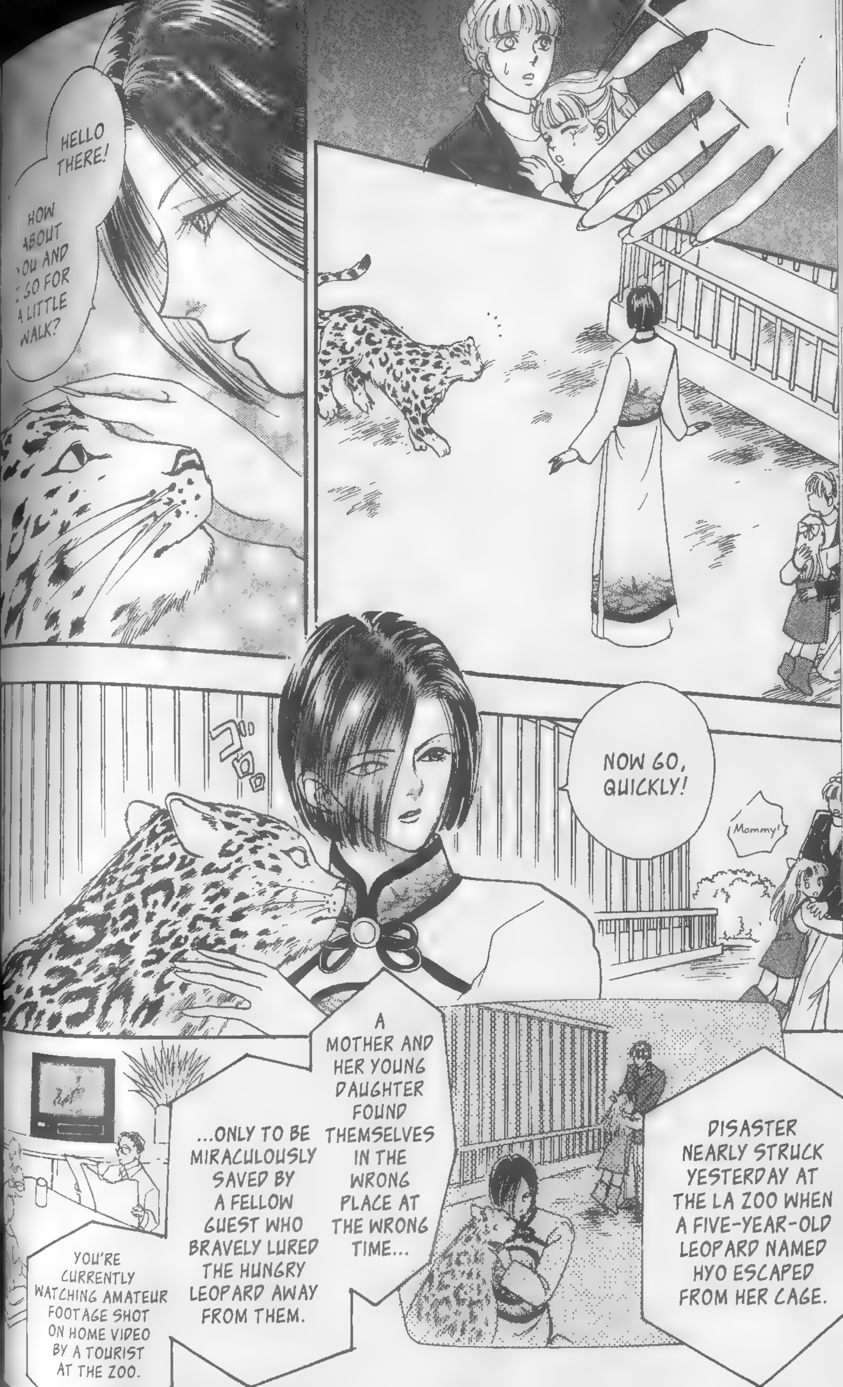
第4話／Dynasty

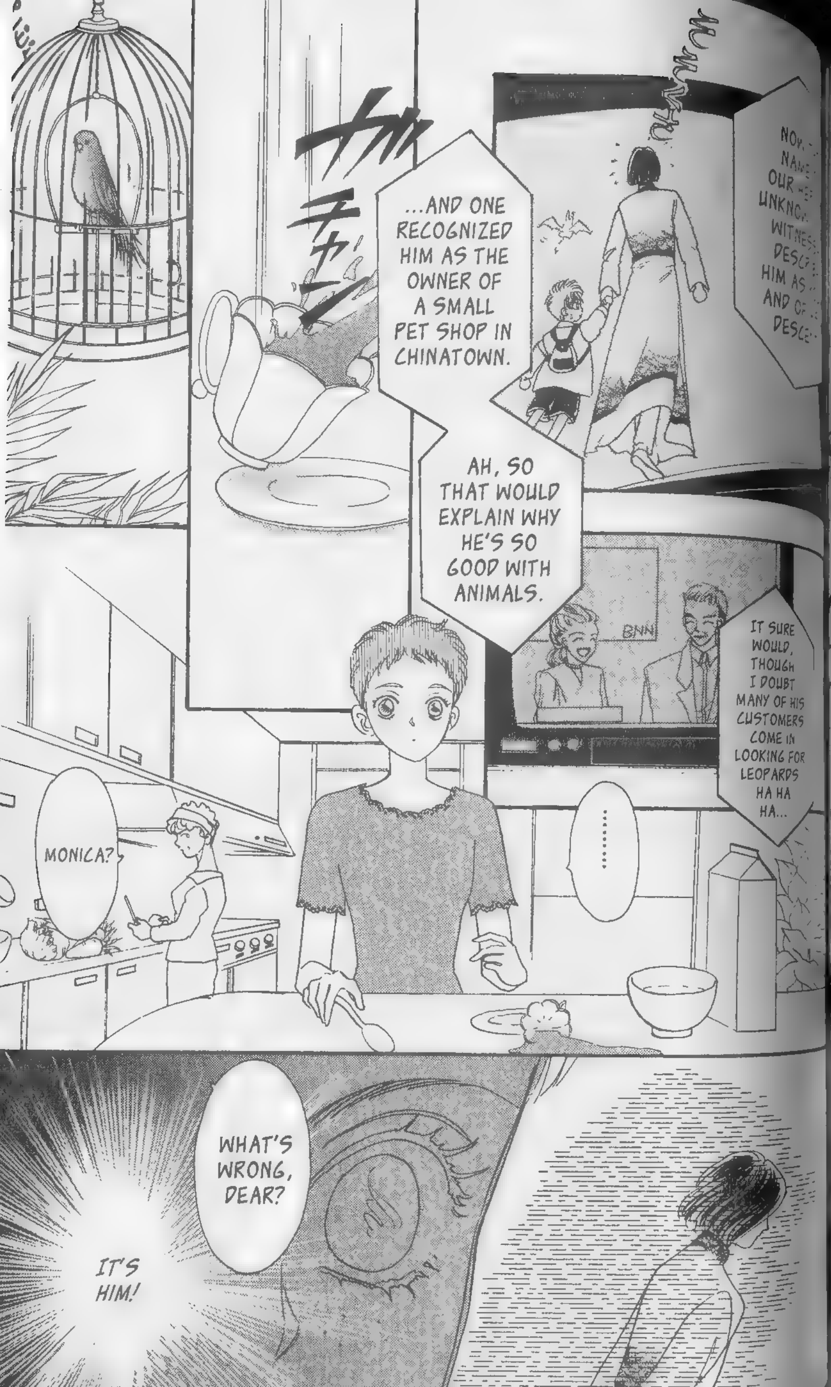


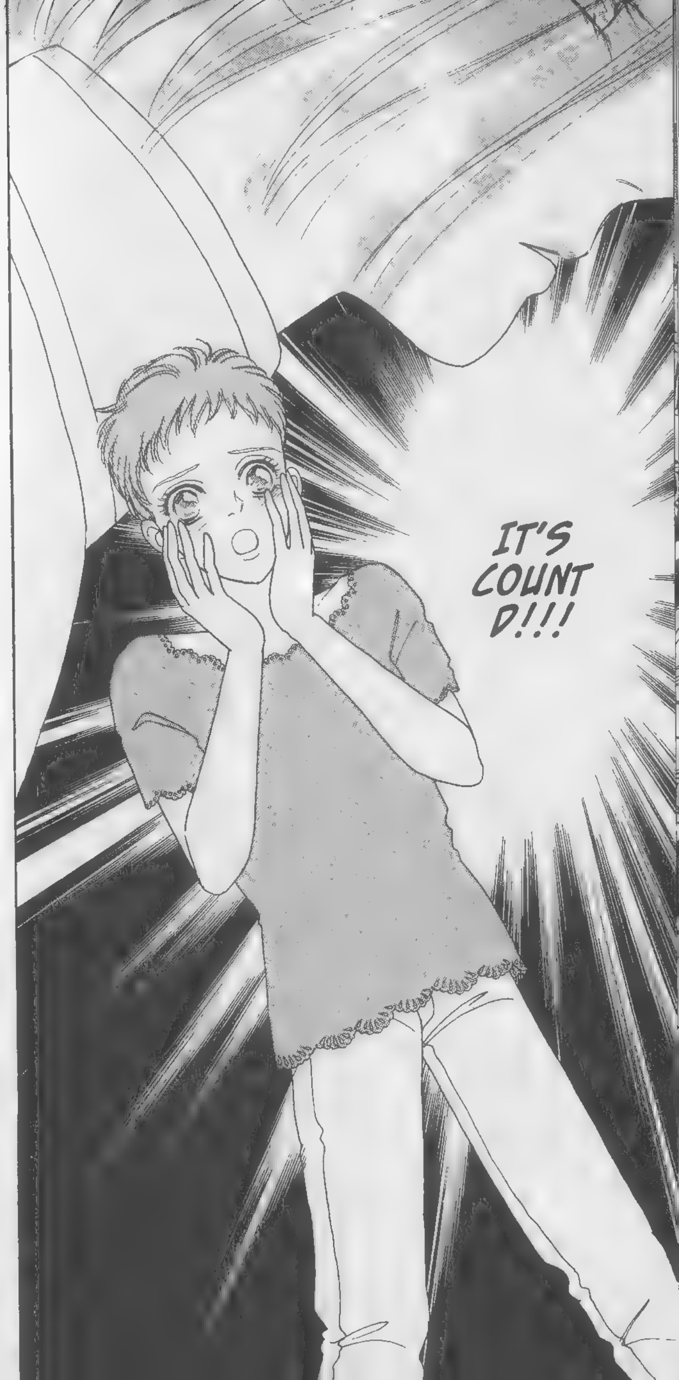

きゃあああぁ
MONKEYS
BIRDS
HYO'S ESCAPED FROM HER CAGE!
GET THE VISITORS OUT OF HERE, NOW!
OH, GOD!
ああーん
UH...
ガァウッ

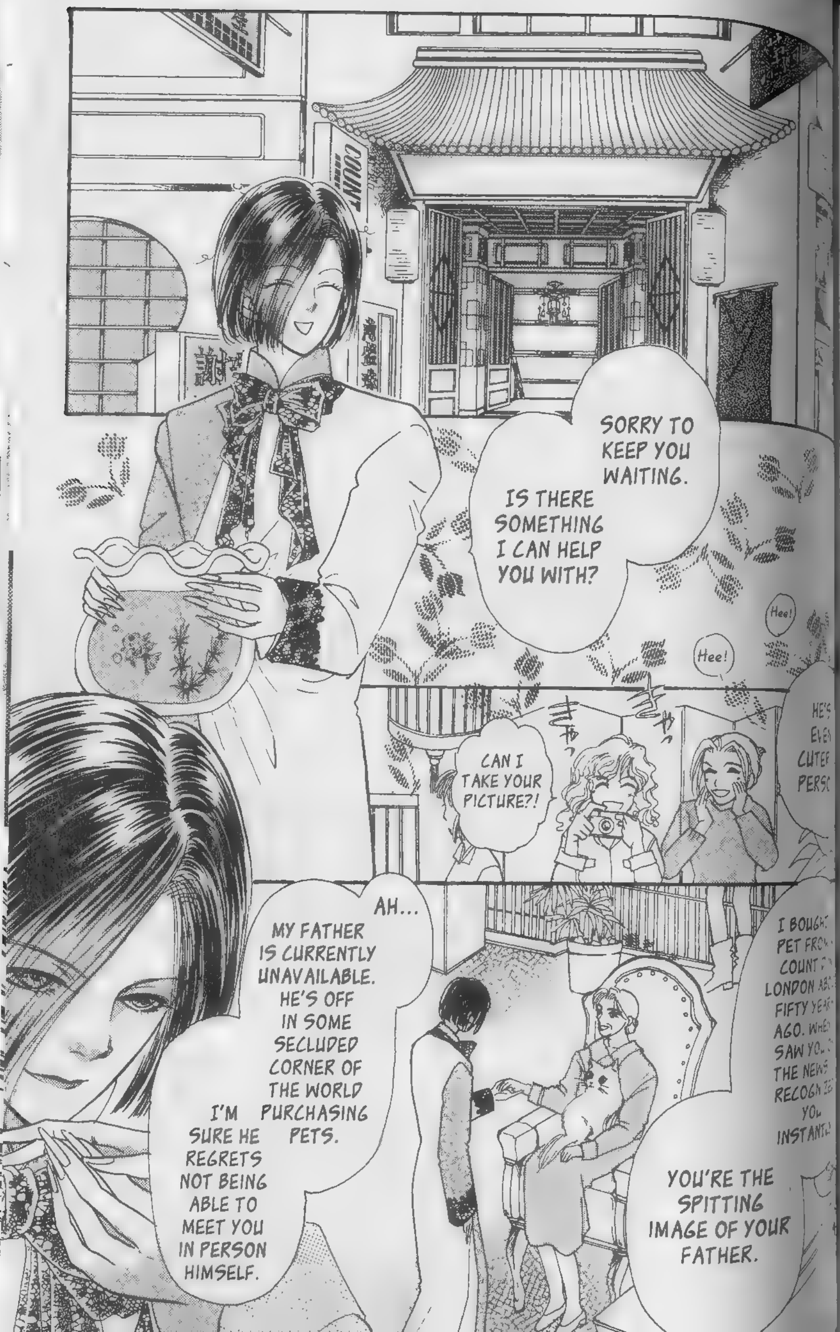
I WISH I COULD SEE HER JUST ONE MORE TIME.

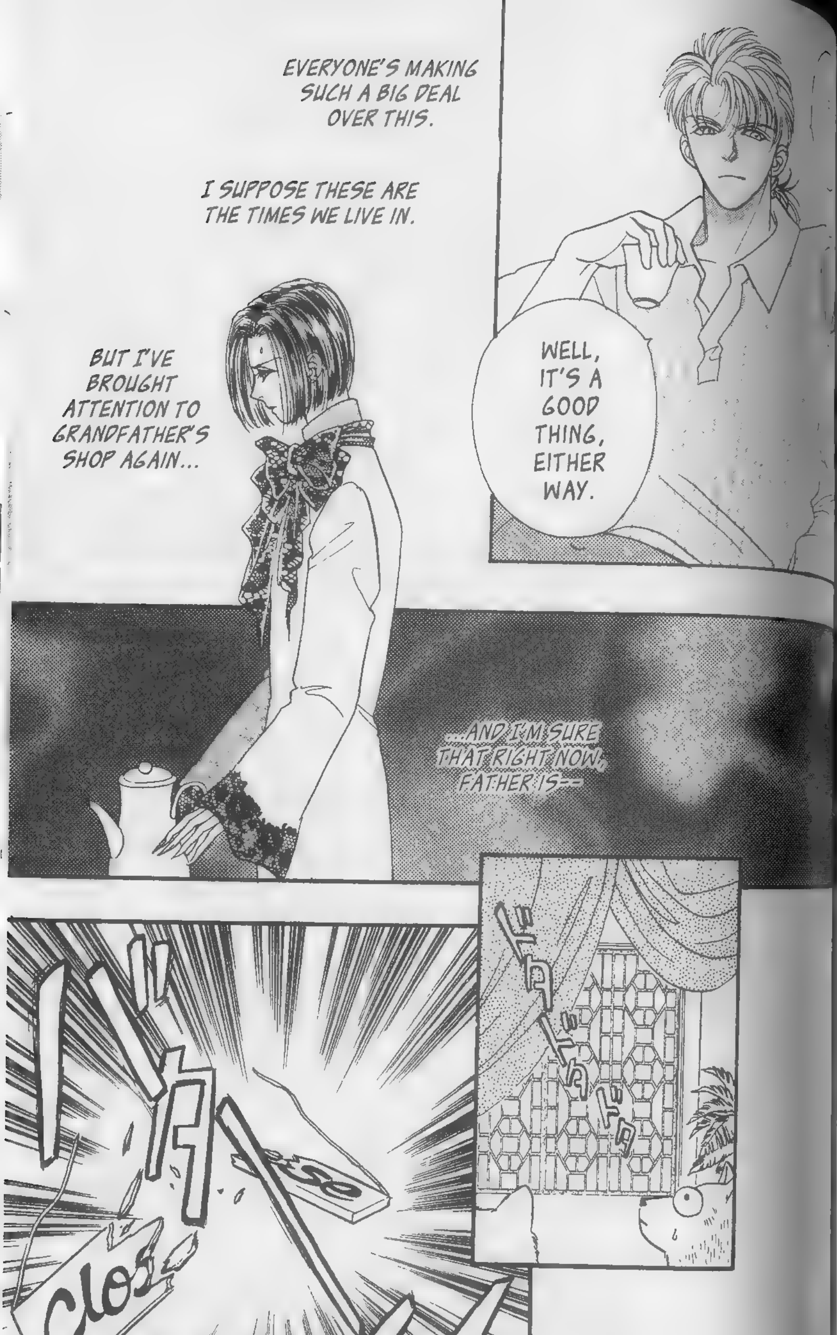
THIS TIME, I'D TELL HER THAT I LOVE HER.

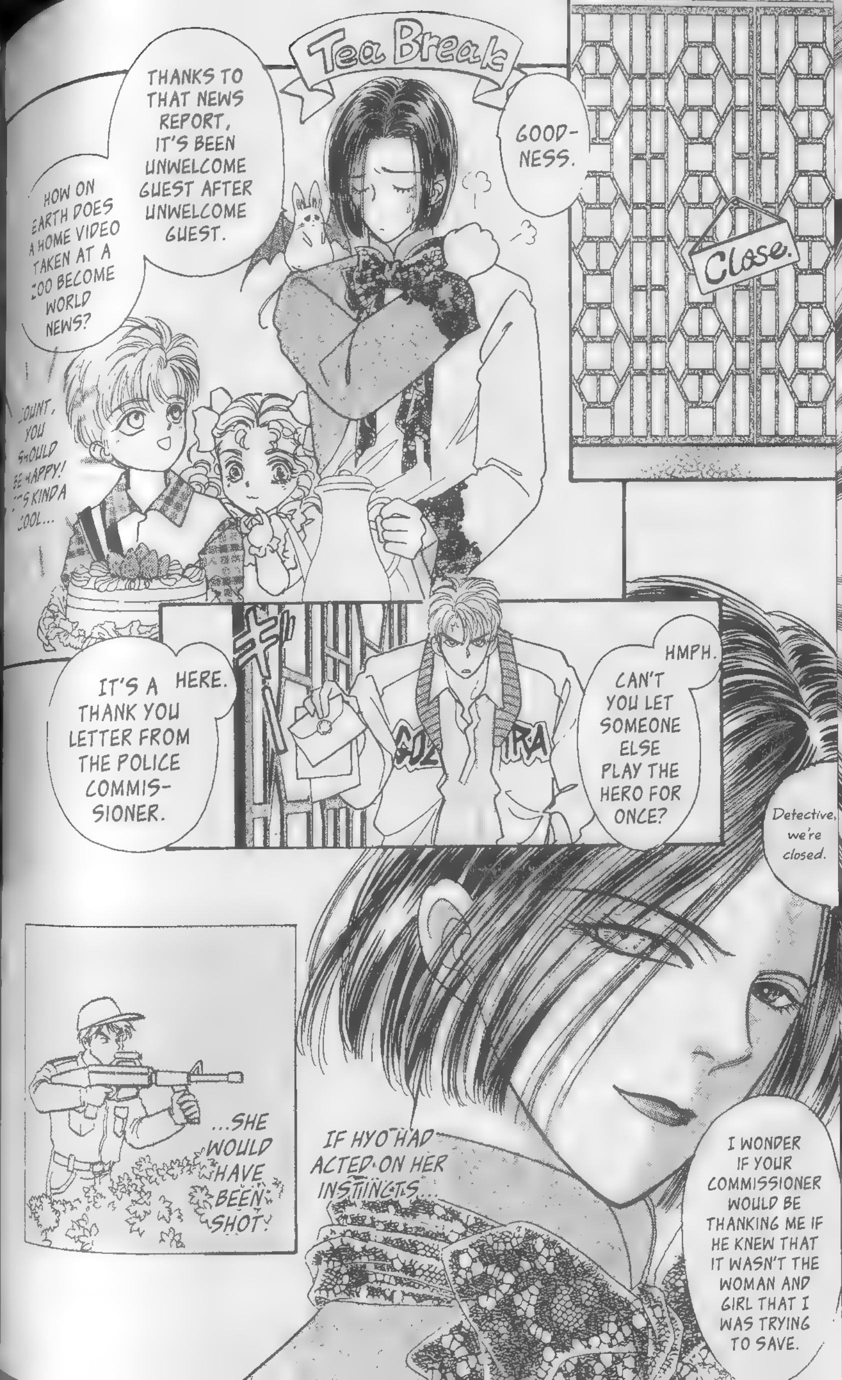

HELLO THERE!
HOW ABOUT OU AND GO FOR A LITTLE WALK?
NOW GO, QUICKLY!
Mommy!
DISASTER NEARLY STRUCK YESTERDAY AT THE LA ZOO WHEN A FIVE-YEAR-OLD LEOPARD NAMED HYO ESCAPED FROM HER CAGE.
A MOTHER AND HER YOUNG DAUGHTER FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME...
...ONLY TO BE MIRACULOUSLY SAVED BY A FELLOW GUEST WHO BRAVELY LURED THE HUNGRY LEOPARD AWAY FROM THEM.
YOU'RE CURRENTLY WATCHING AMATEUR FOOTAGE SHOT ON HOME VIDEO BY A TOURIST AT THE ZOO.

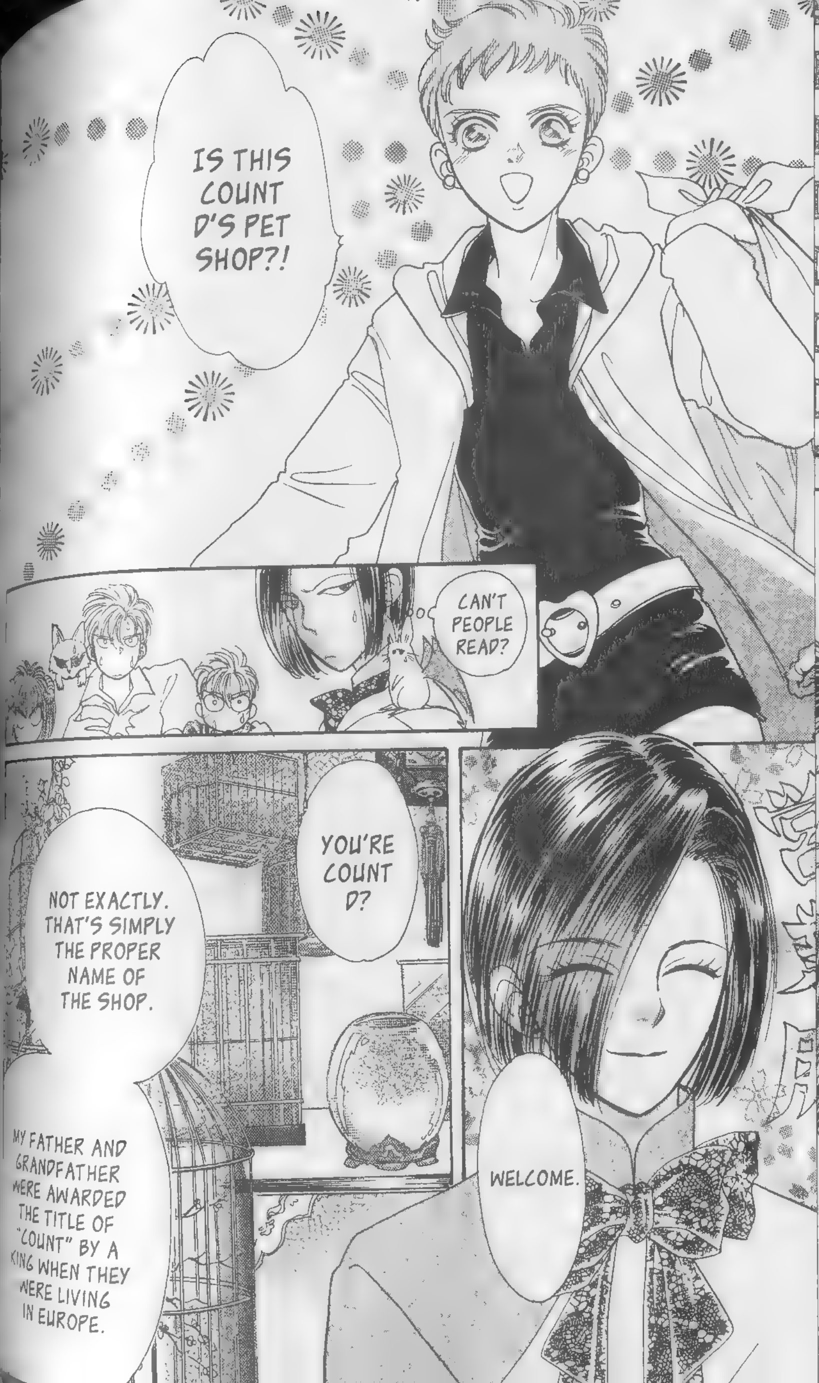

NOW, NAM OUR UNKNO WITNES DESC HIM AS AND O DESC
...AND ONE RECOGNIZED HIM AS THE OWNER OF A SMALL PET SHOP IN CHINATOWN.
ガチャン
AH, SO THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY HE'S SO GOOD WITH ANIMALS.
IT SURE WOULD, THOUGH I DOUBT MANY OF HIS CUSTOMERS COME IN LOOKING FOR LEOPARDS HA HA HA...
BNN
....
MONICA?
WHAT'S WRONG, DEAR?
IT'S HIM!

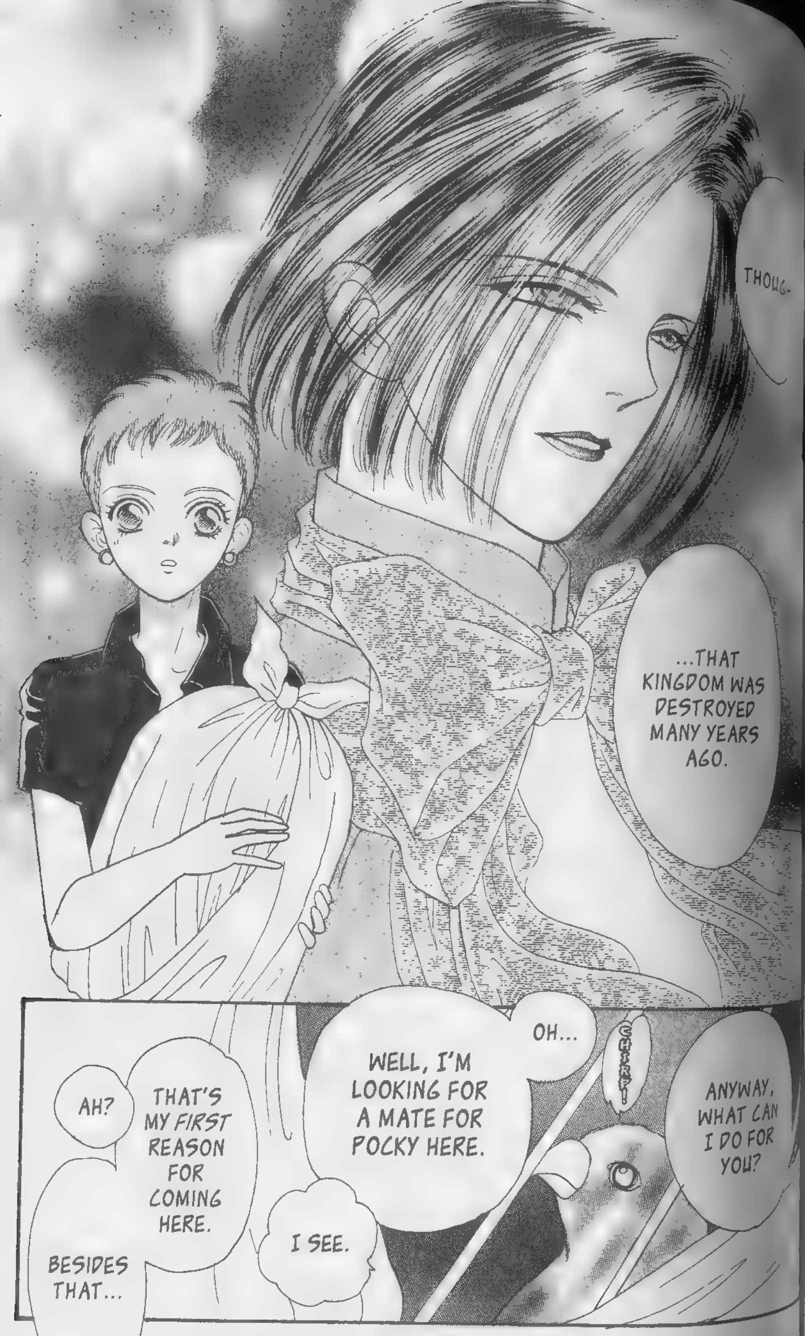

IT'S COUNT D!!!

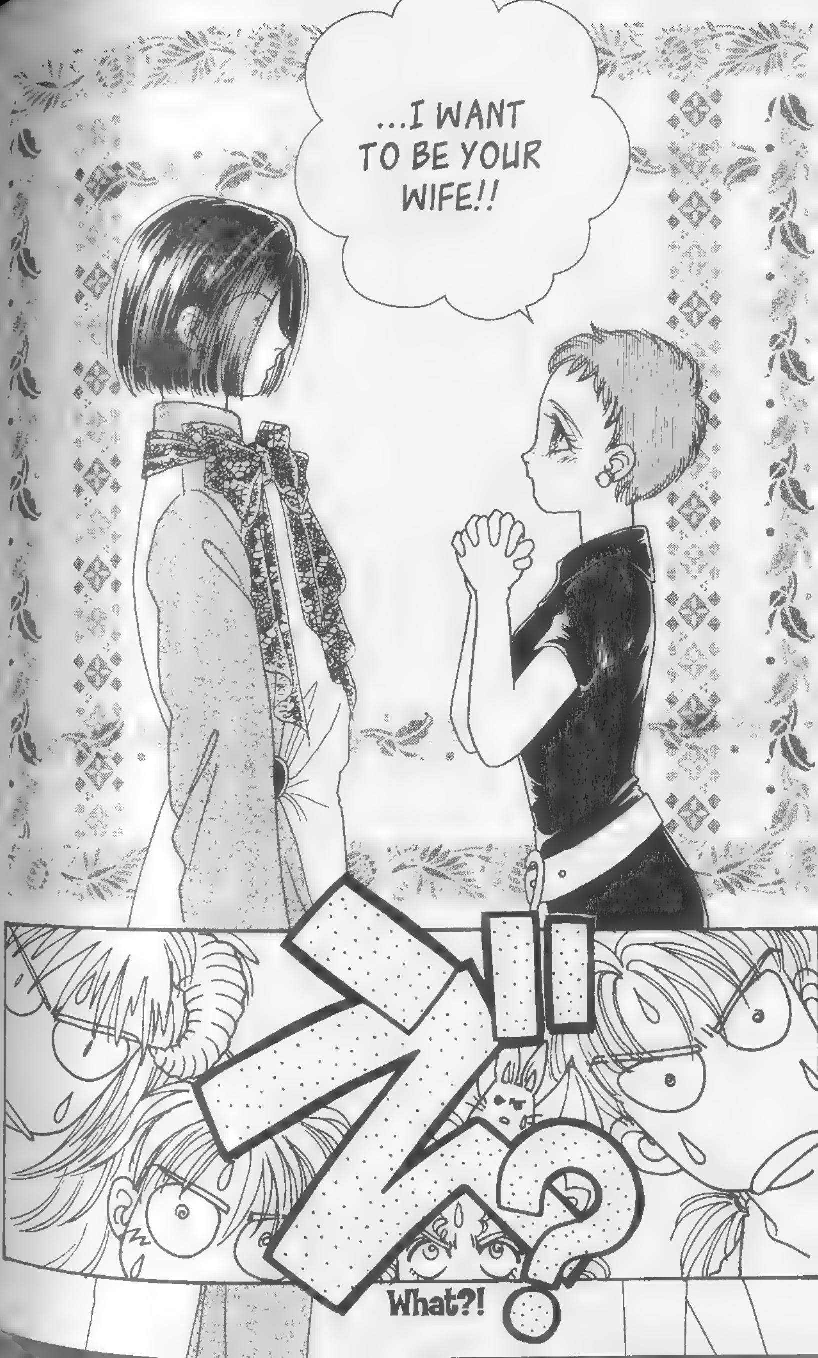

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH?
Hee!
Hee!
HE'S EVEN CUTEF PERSC
CAN I TAKE YOUR PICTURE?!
I BOUGHT PET FROM COUNT LONDON ABO FIFTY YEAR AGO. WHEN SAW YOU THE NEWS RECOGNIZED YOU INSTANTLY
YOU'RE THE SPITTING IMAGE OF YOUR FATHER.
AH... MY FATHER IS CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE. HE'S OFF IN SOME SECLUDED CORNER OF THE WORLD PURCHASING PETS.
I'M SURE HE REGRETS NOT BEING ABLE TO MEET YOU IN PERSON HIMSELF.

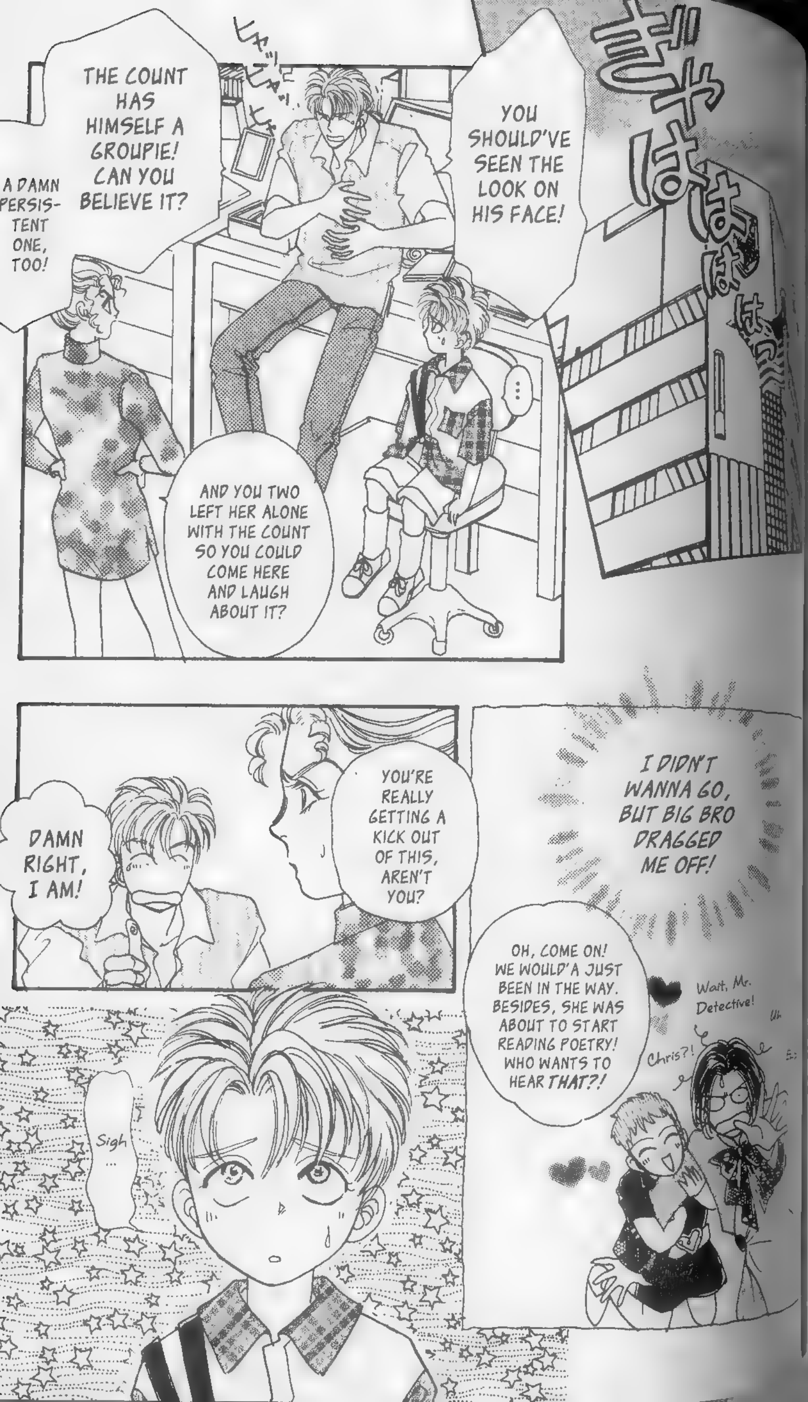

WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING, EITHER WAY.
EVERYONE'S MAKING SUCH A BIG DEAL OVER THIS.
I SUPPOSE THESE ARE THE TIMES WE LIVE IN.
BUT I'VE BROUGHT ATTENTION TO GRANDFATHER'S SHOP AGAIN...
...AND I'M SURE THAT RIGHT NOW, FATHER IS--
Close
Clos

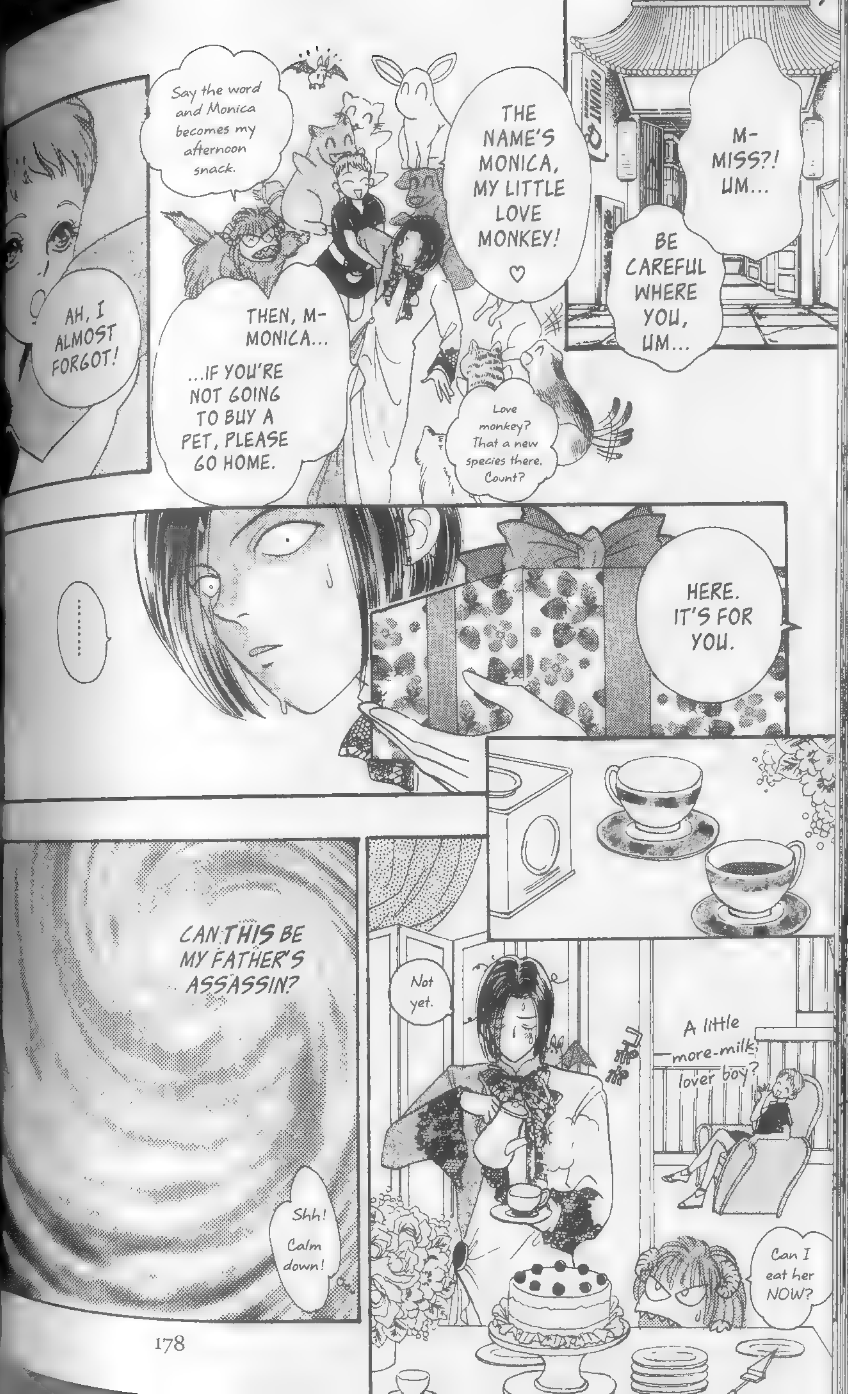

Tea Break
Close.
GOOD-NESS.
THANKS TO THAT NEWS REPORT, IT'S BEEN UNWELCOME GUEST AFTER UNWELCOME GUEST.
HOW ON EARTH DOES A HOME VIDEO TAKEN AT A ZOO BECOME WORLD NEWS?
OUNT, YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY! 'S KINDA OOL...
Detective, we're closed.
HMPH.
CAN'T YOU LET SOMEONE ELSE PLAY THE HERO FOR ONCE?
HERE.
IT'S A THANK YOU LETTER FROM THE POLICE COMMIS-SIONER.
GOZ IRA
I WONDER IF YOUR COMMISSIONER WOULD BE THANKING ME IF HE KNEW THAT IT WASN'T THE WOMAN AND GIRL THAT I WAS TRYING TO SAVE.
IF HYO HAD ACTED ON HER INSTINCTS...
...SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN SHOT.

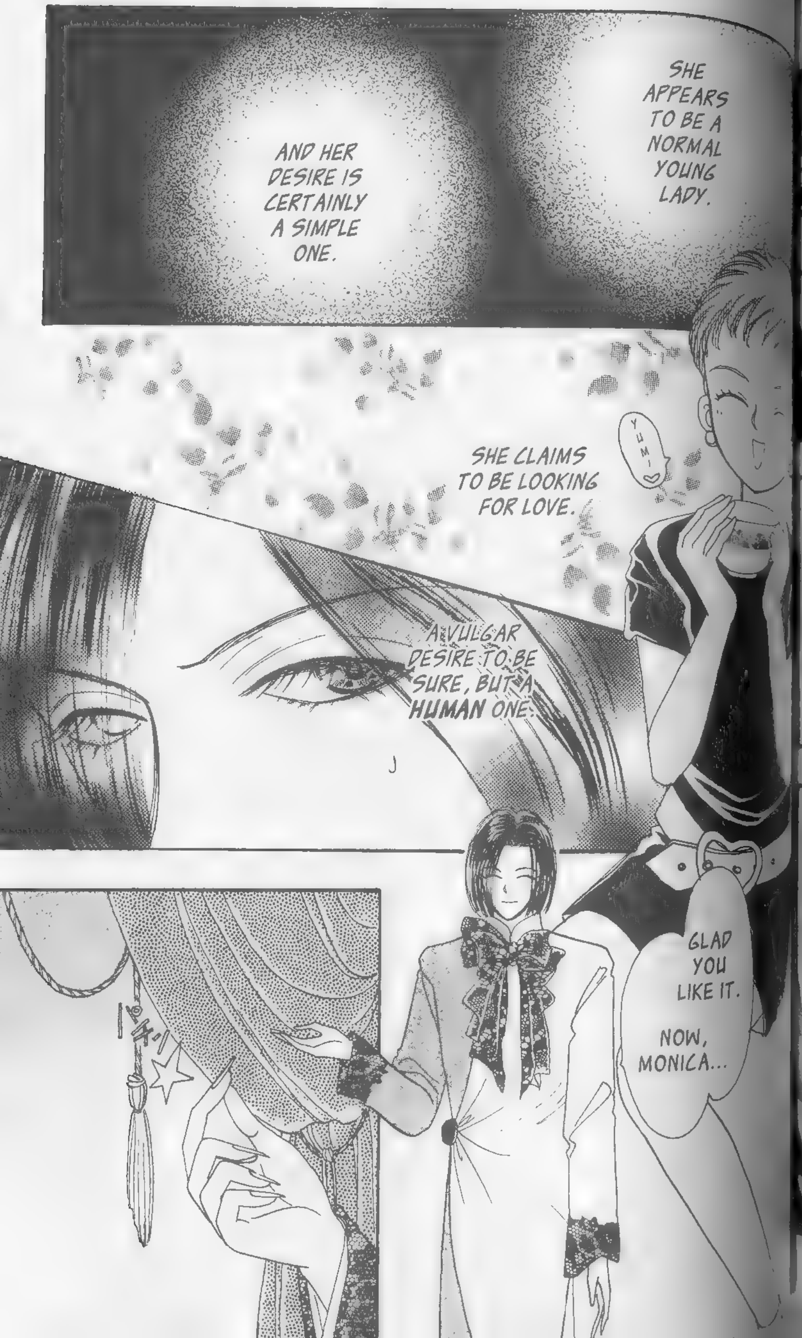

IS THIS COUNT D'S PET SHOP?!
CAN'T PEOPLE READ?
WELCOME.
YOU'RE COUNT D?
NOT EXACTLY. THAT'S SIMPLY THE PROPER NAME OF THE SHOP.
MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER WERE AWARDED THE TITLE OF "COUNT" BY A KING WHEN THEY WERE LIVING IN EUROPE.

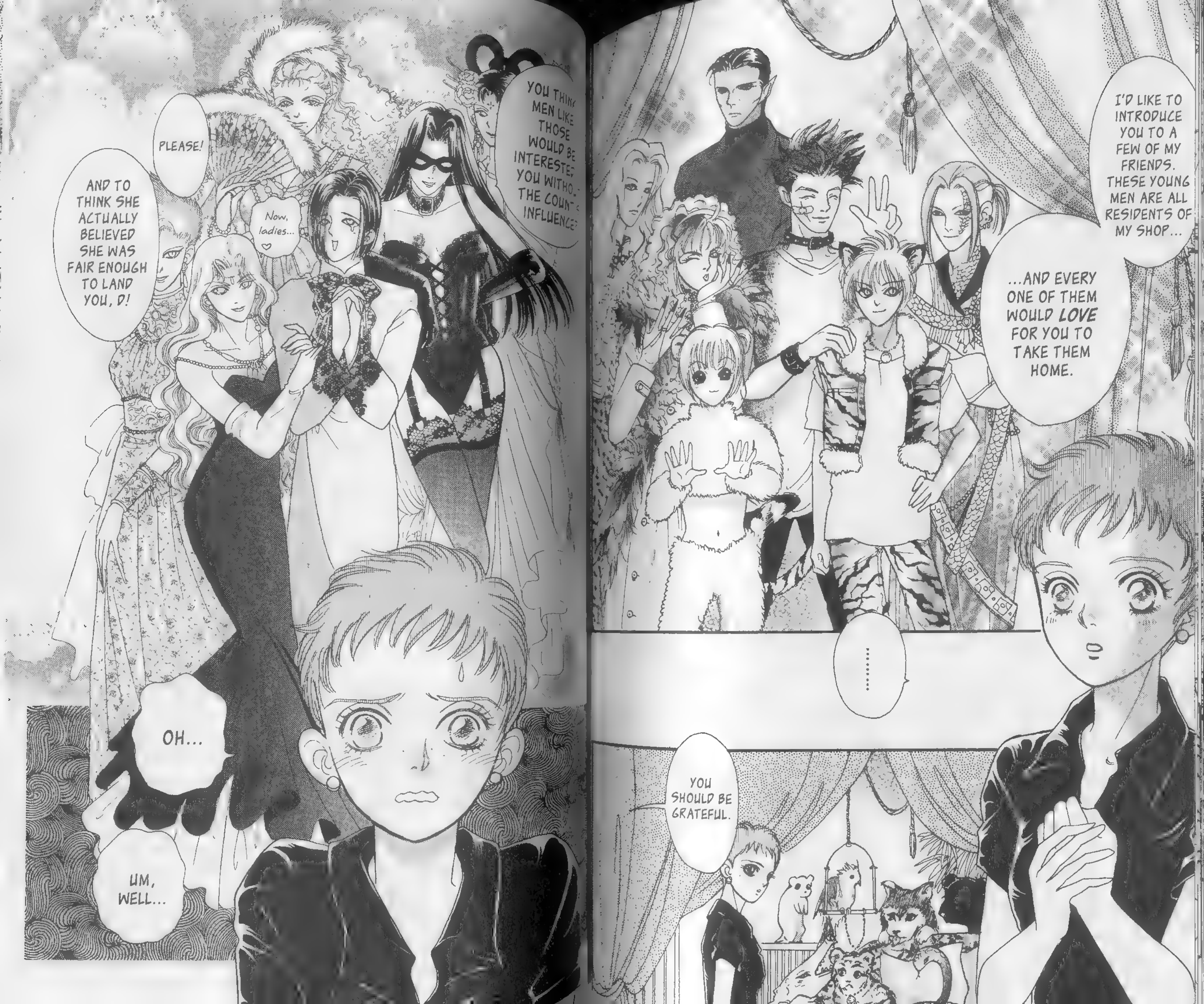

THOUG-
...THAT KINGDOM WAS DESTROYED MANY YEARS AGO.
ANYWAY, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
CHIRP!
OH...
WELL, I'M LOOKING FOR A MATE FOR POCKY HERE.
I SEE.
THAT'S MY *FIRST* REASON FOR COMING HERE.
AH?
BESIDES THAT...

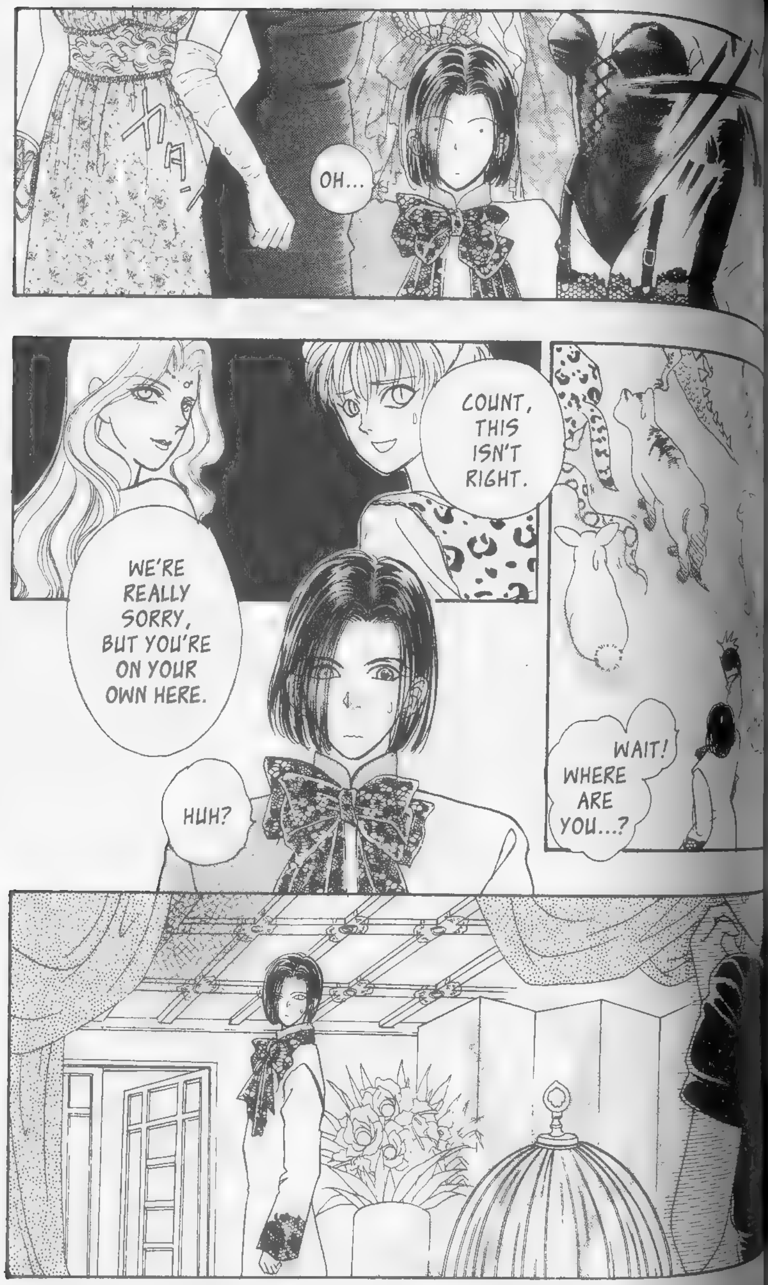

...I WANT TO BE YOUR WIFE!!
What?!

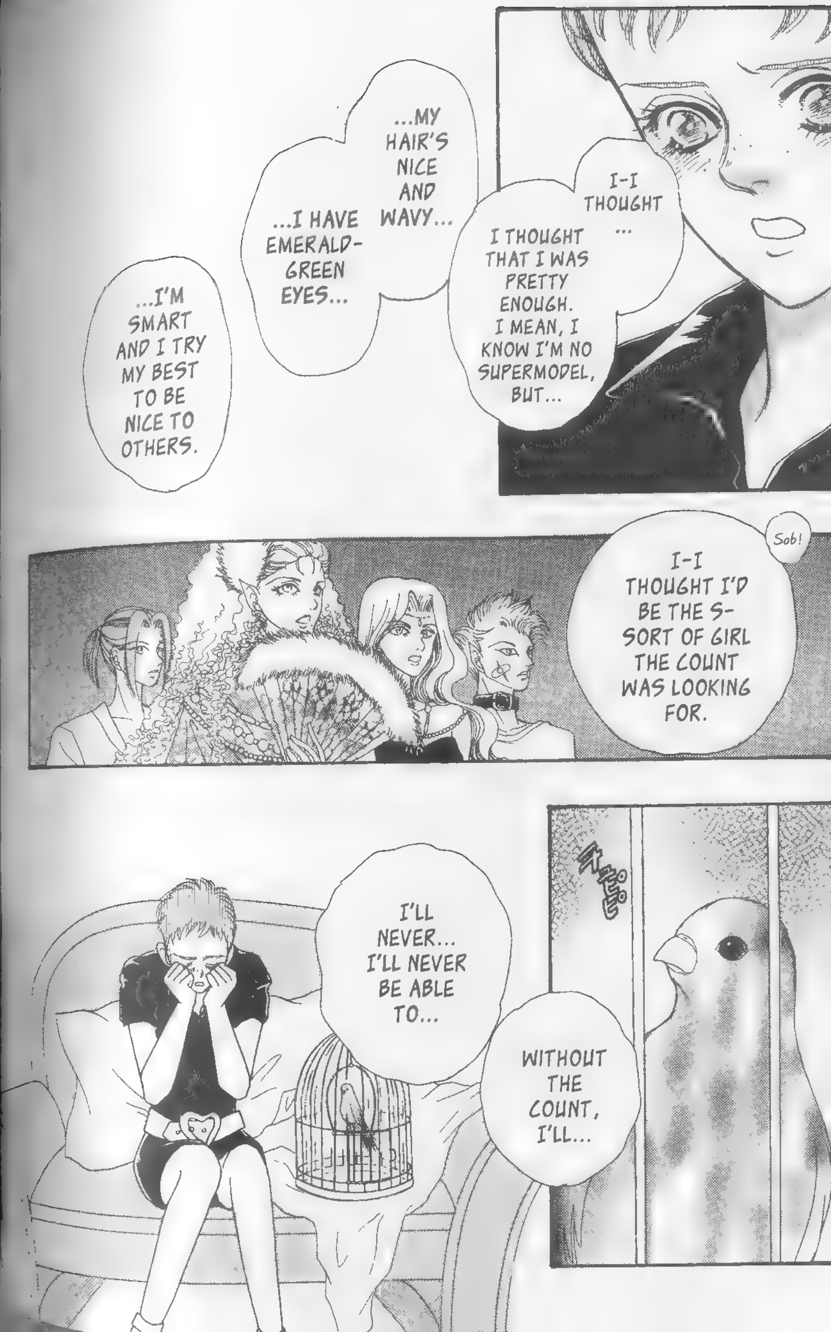

ぎゃははは はっ
YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE LOOK ON HIS FACE!
ヒャッヒャッヒャ
THE COUNT HAS HIMSELF A GROUPIE! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
A DAMN PERSISTENT ONE, TOO!
...
AND YOU TWO LEFT HER ALONE WITH THE COUNT SO YOU COULD COME HERE AND LAUGH ABOUT IT?
I DIDN'T WANNA GO, BUT BIG BRO DRAGGED ME OFF!
OH, COME ON! WE WOULD'A JUST BEEN IN THE WAY. BESIDES, SHE WAS ABOUT TO START READING POETRY! WHO WANTS TO HEAR THAT?!
Wait, Mr. Detective!
Chris?!
Uh
YOU'RE REALLY GETTING A KICK OUT OF THIS, AREN'T YOU?
DAMN RIGHT, I AM!
Sigh...

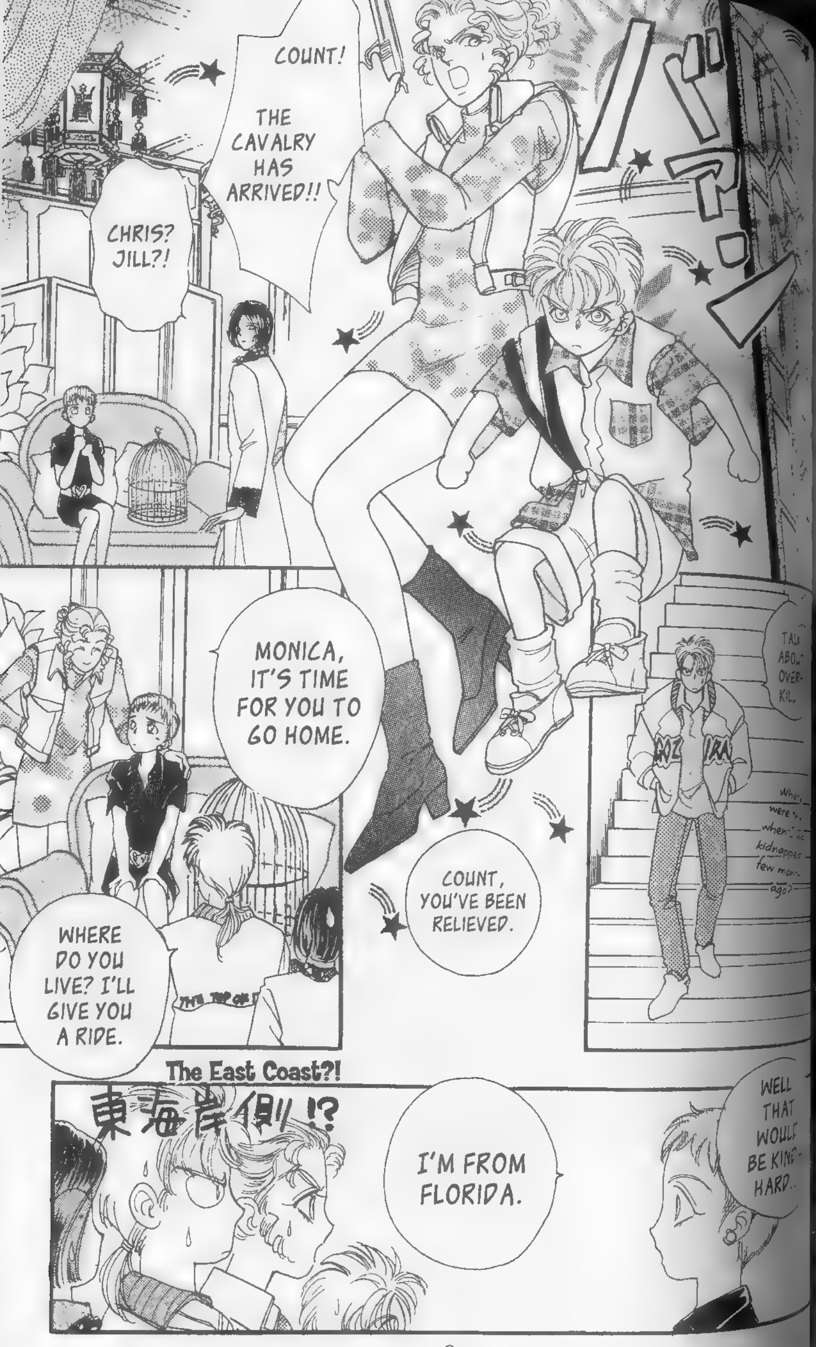

M-MISS?! UM...
BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU, UM...
THE NAME'S MONICA, MY LITTLE LOVE MONKEY! ♡
Say the word and Monica becomes my afternoon snack.
Love monkey? That a new species there, Count?
THEN, M-MONICA...
...IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BUY A PET, PLEASE GO HOME.
AH, I ALMOST FORGOT!
HERE. IT'S FOR YOU.
....
A little more milk, lover boy?
Not yet.
Can I eat her NOW?
CAN THIS BE MY FATHER'S ASSASSIN?
Shh! Calm down!

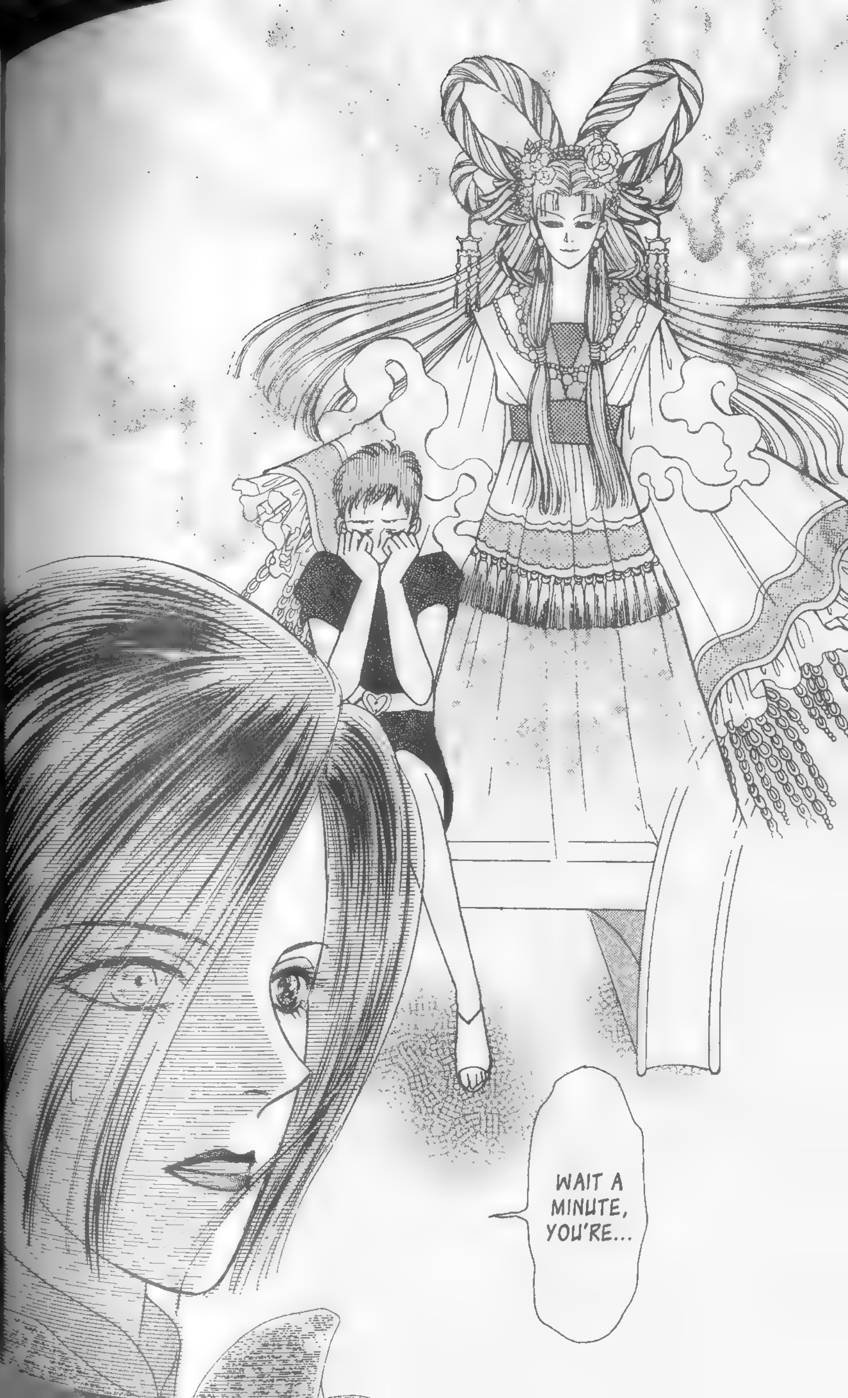

SHE APPEARS TO BE A NORMAL YOUNG LADY.
AND HER DESIRE IS CERTAINLY A SIMPLE ONE.
YUM!
SHE CLAIMS TO BE LOOKING FOR LOVE.
A VULGAR DESIRE TO BE SURE, BUT A HUMAN ONE.
GLAD YOU LIKE IT.
NOW, MONICA...

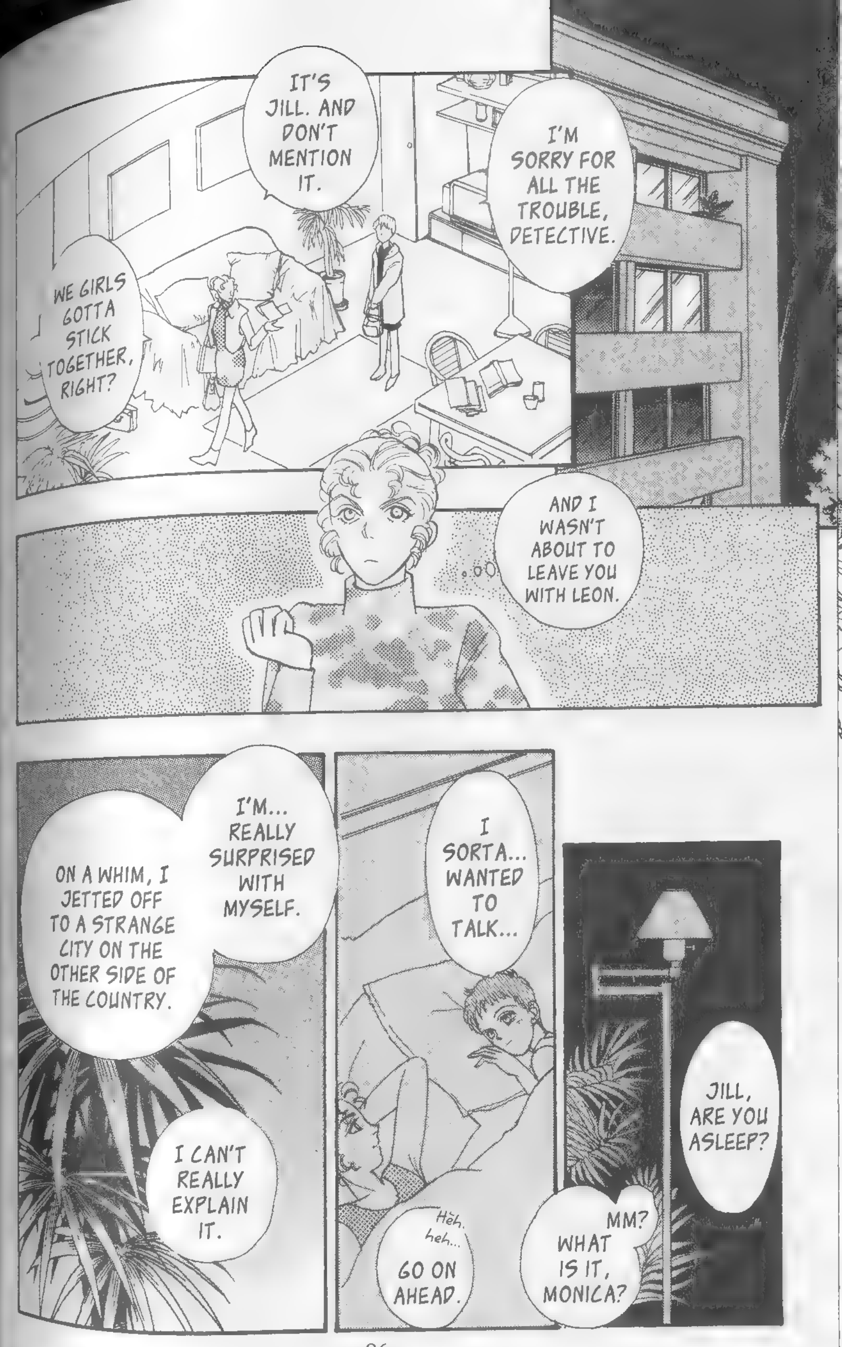

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO A FEW OF MY FRIENDS. THESE YOUNG MEN ARE ALL RESIDENTS OF MY SHOP...
...AND EVERY ONE OF THEM WOULD *LOVE* FOR YOU TO TAKE THEM HOME.
....
YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL.
YOU THIN MEN LIKE THOSE WOULD BE INTERESTE YOU WITHO THE COUN INFLUENCE?
PLEASE!
AND TO THINK SHE ACTUALLY BELIEVED SHE WAS FAIR ENOUGH TO LAND YOU, D!
Now, ladies...
OH...
UM, WELL...

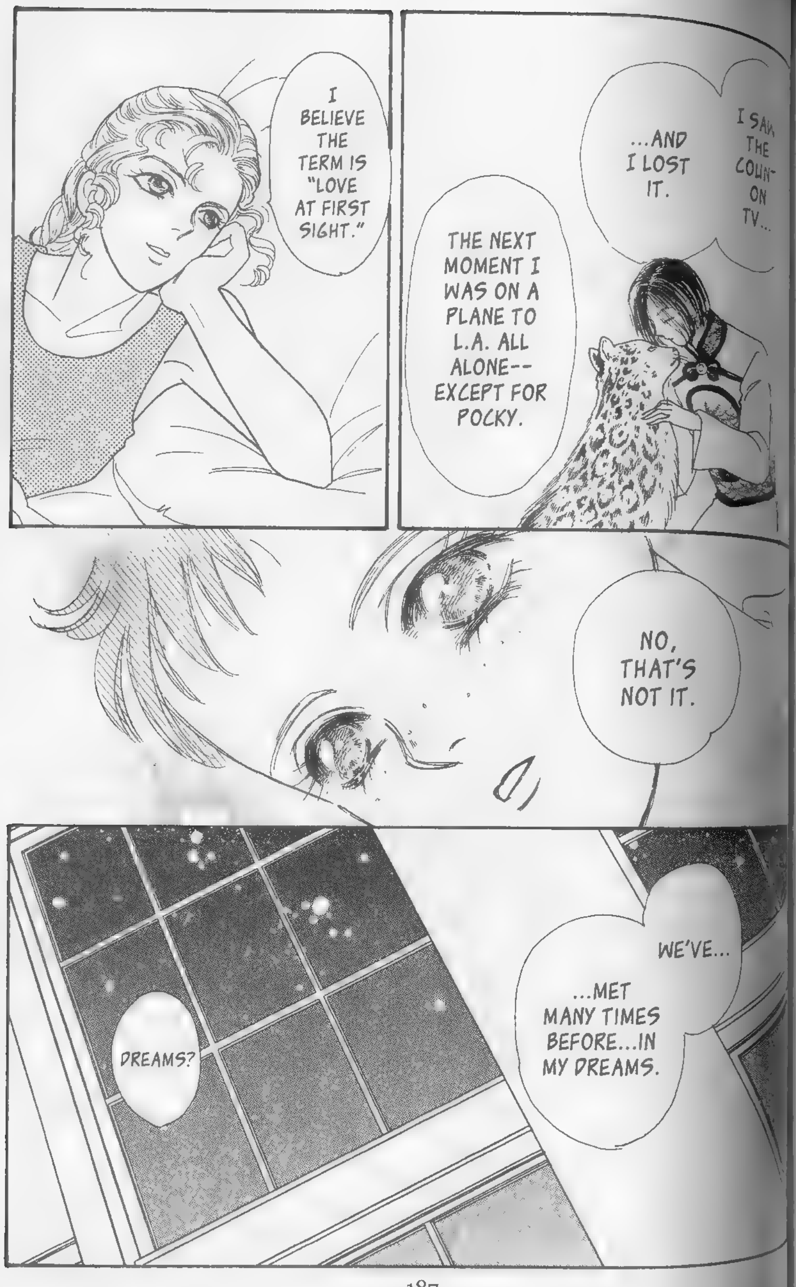

カタ
OH...
COUNT, THIS ISN'T RIGHT.
WE'RE REALLY SORRY, BUT YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN HERE.
HUH?
WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU...?

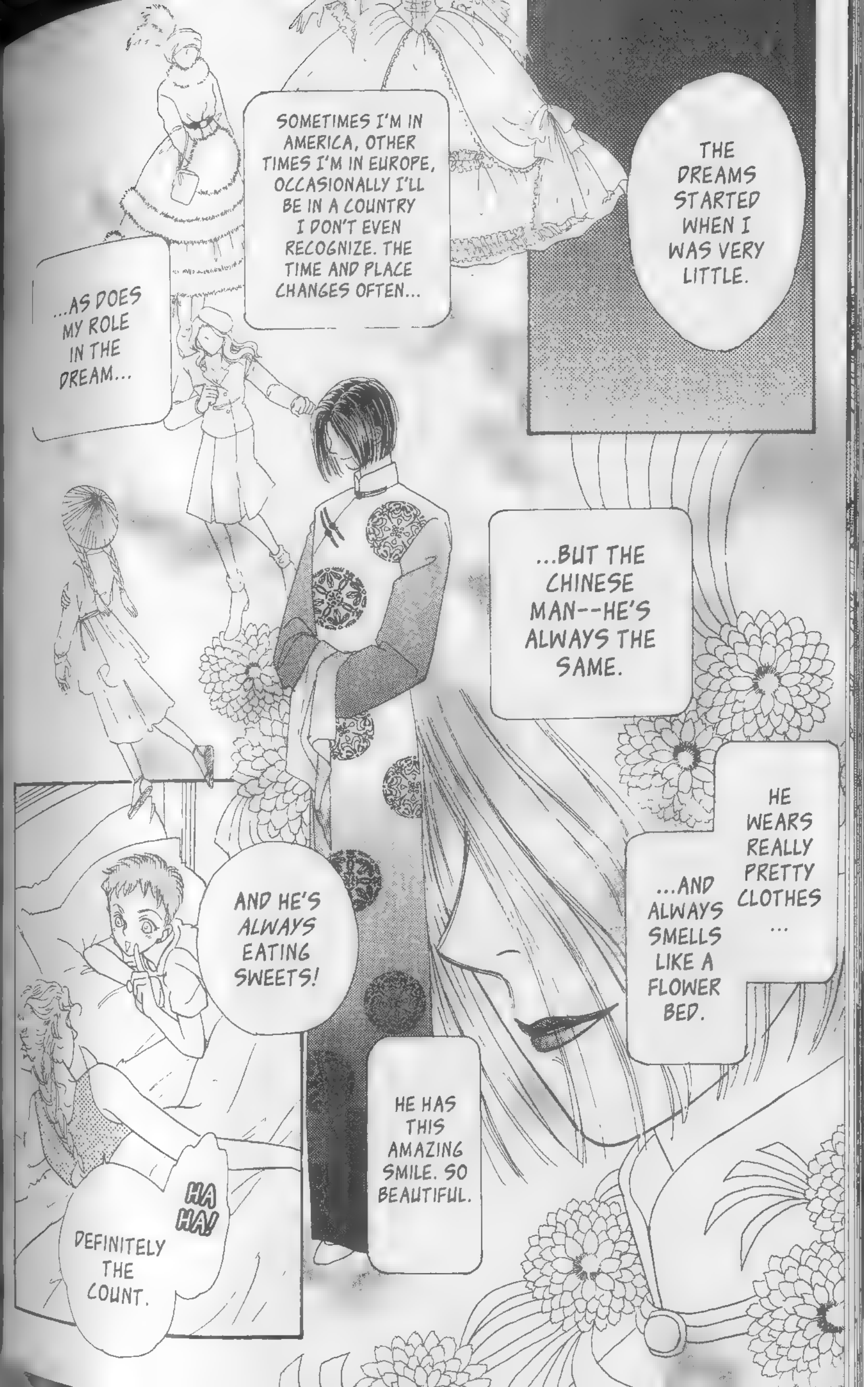

I-I THOUGHT...
I THOUGHT THAT I WAS PRETTY ENOUGH. I MEAN, I KNOW I'M NO SUPERMODEL, BUT...
...MY HAIR'S NICE AND WAVY...
...I HAVE EMERALD-GREEN EYES...
...I'M SMART AND I TRY MY BEST TO BE NICE TO OTHERS.
Sob!
I-I THOUGHT I'D BE THE S-SORT OF GIRL THE COUNT WAS LOOKING FOR.
I'LL NEVER... I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO...
WITHOUT THE COUNT, I'LL...

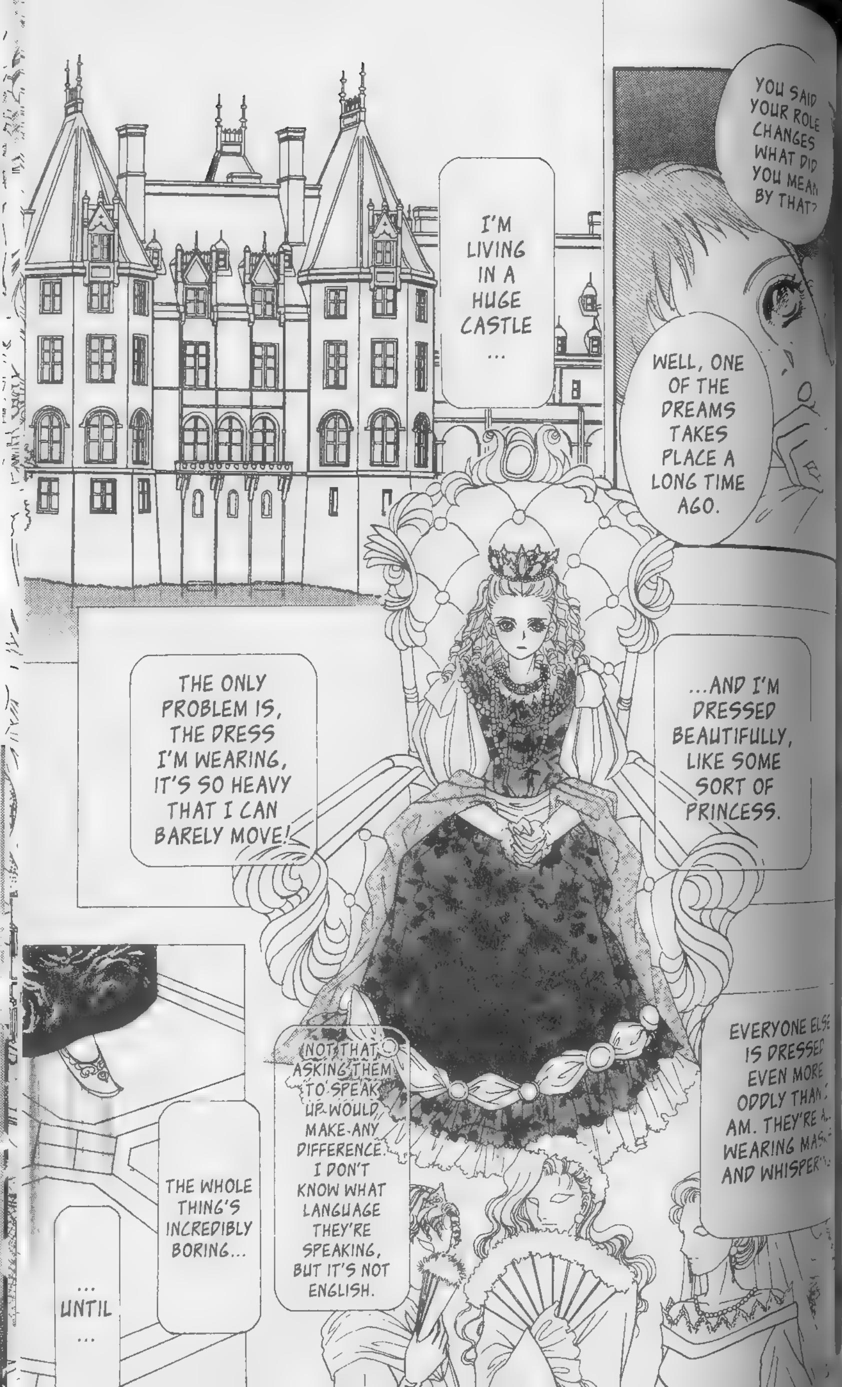

COUNT!
THE CAVALRY HAS ARRIVED!!
CHRIS? JILL?!
バァーン
MONICA, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO HOME.
TALK ABO OVER-KIL
Whe were t when ne kidnappe few mon ago?
COUNT, YOU'VE BEEN RELIEVED.
WHERE DO YOU LIVE? I'LL GIVE YOU A RIDE.
The East Coast?!
東海岸側!?
I'M FROM FLORIDA.
WELL THAT WOULD BE KIND HARD...

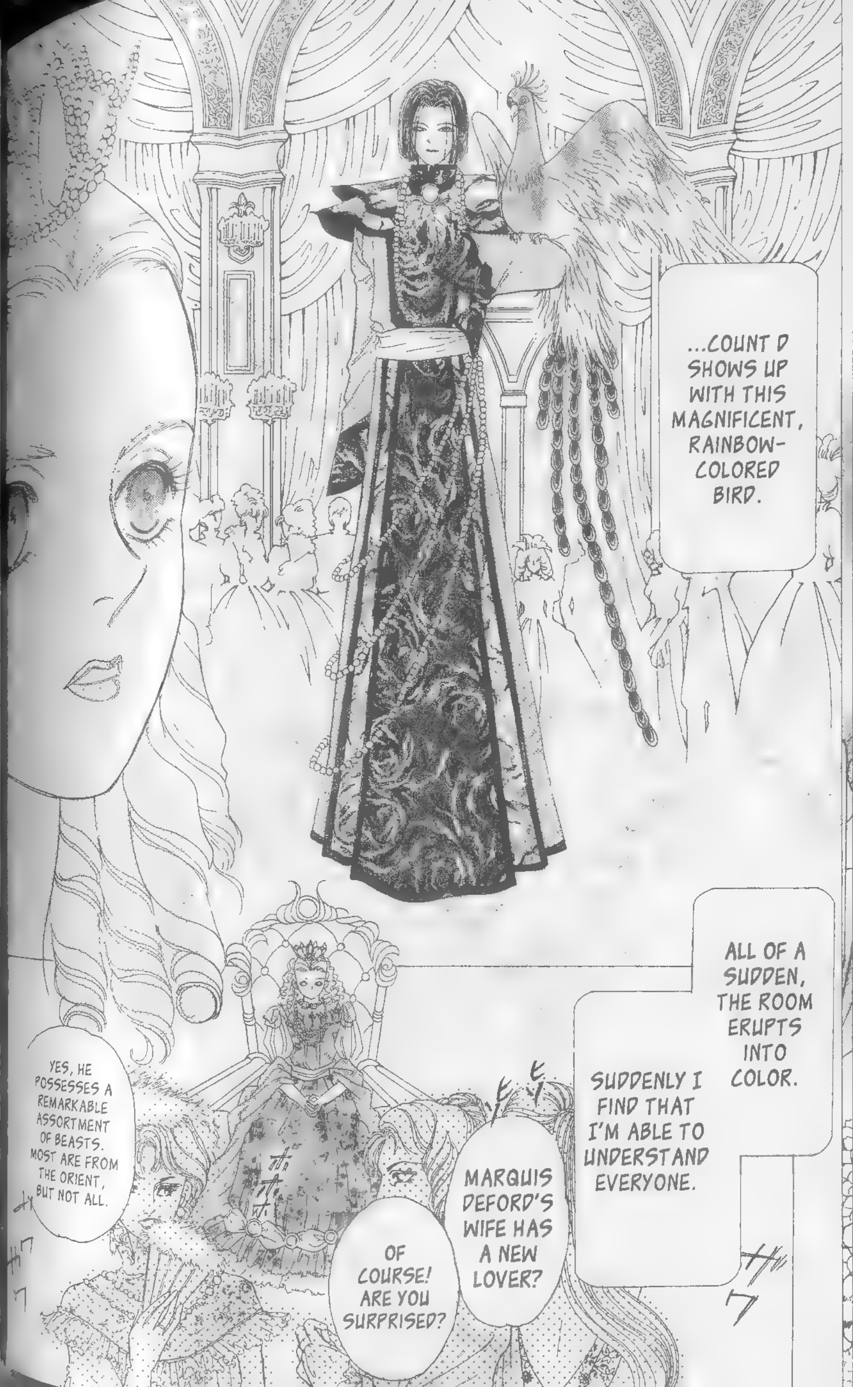

WAIT A MINUTE, YOU'RE...

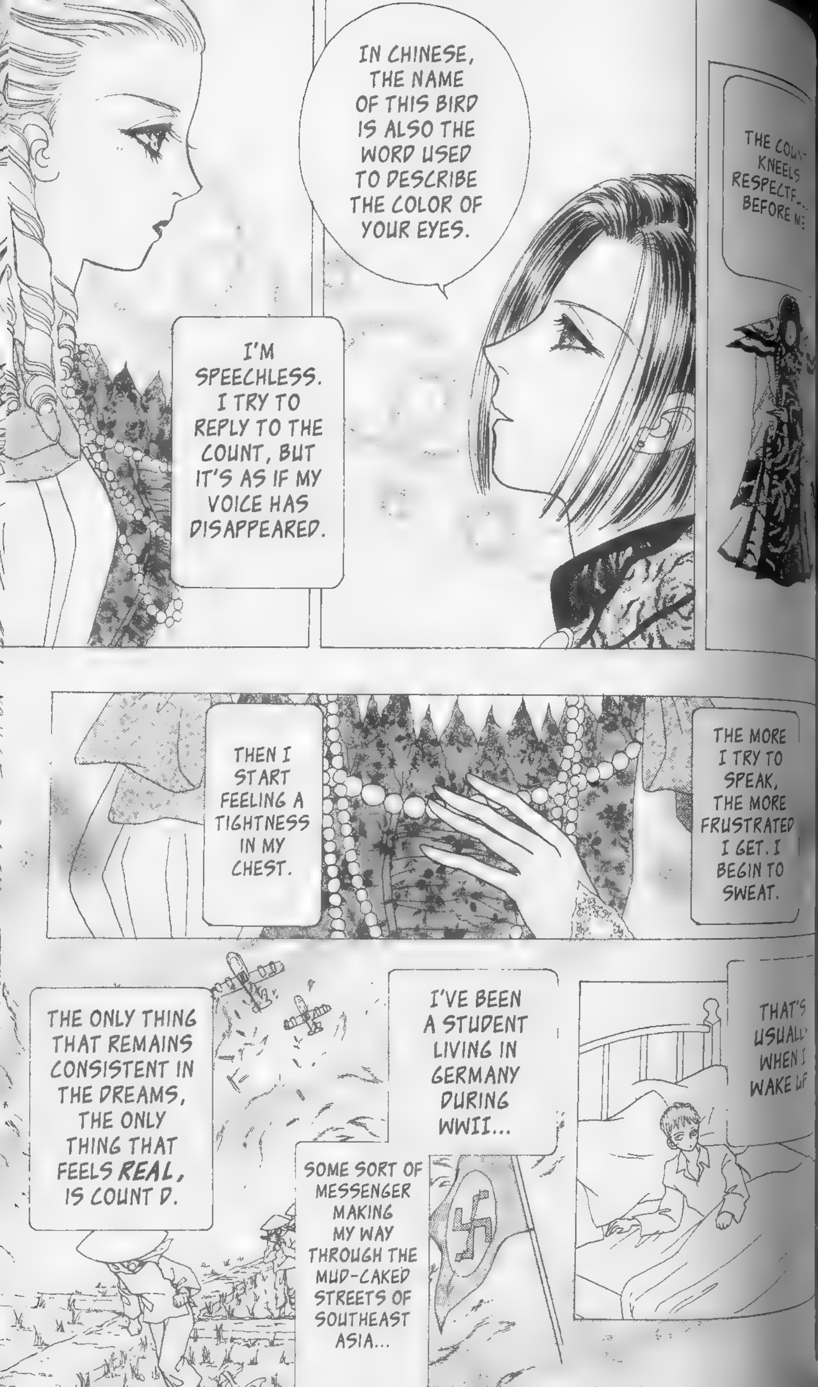

I'M SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE, DETECTIVE.
IT'S JILL. AND DON'T MENTION IT.
WE GIRLS GOTTA STICK TOGETHER, RIGHT?
AND I WASN'T ABOUT TO LEAVE YOU WITH LEON.
JILL, ARE YOU ASLEEP?
MM? WHAT IS IT, MONICA?
I SORTA... WANTED TO TALK...
Heh, heh... GO ON AHEAD.
I'M... REALLY SURPRISED WITH MYSELF.
ON A WHIM, I JETTED OFF TO A STRANGE CITY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTRY.
I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN IT.

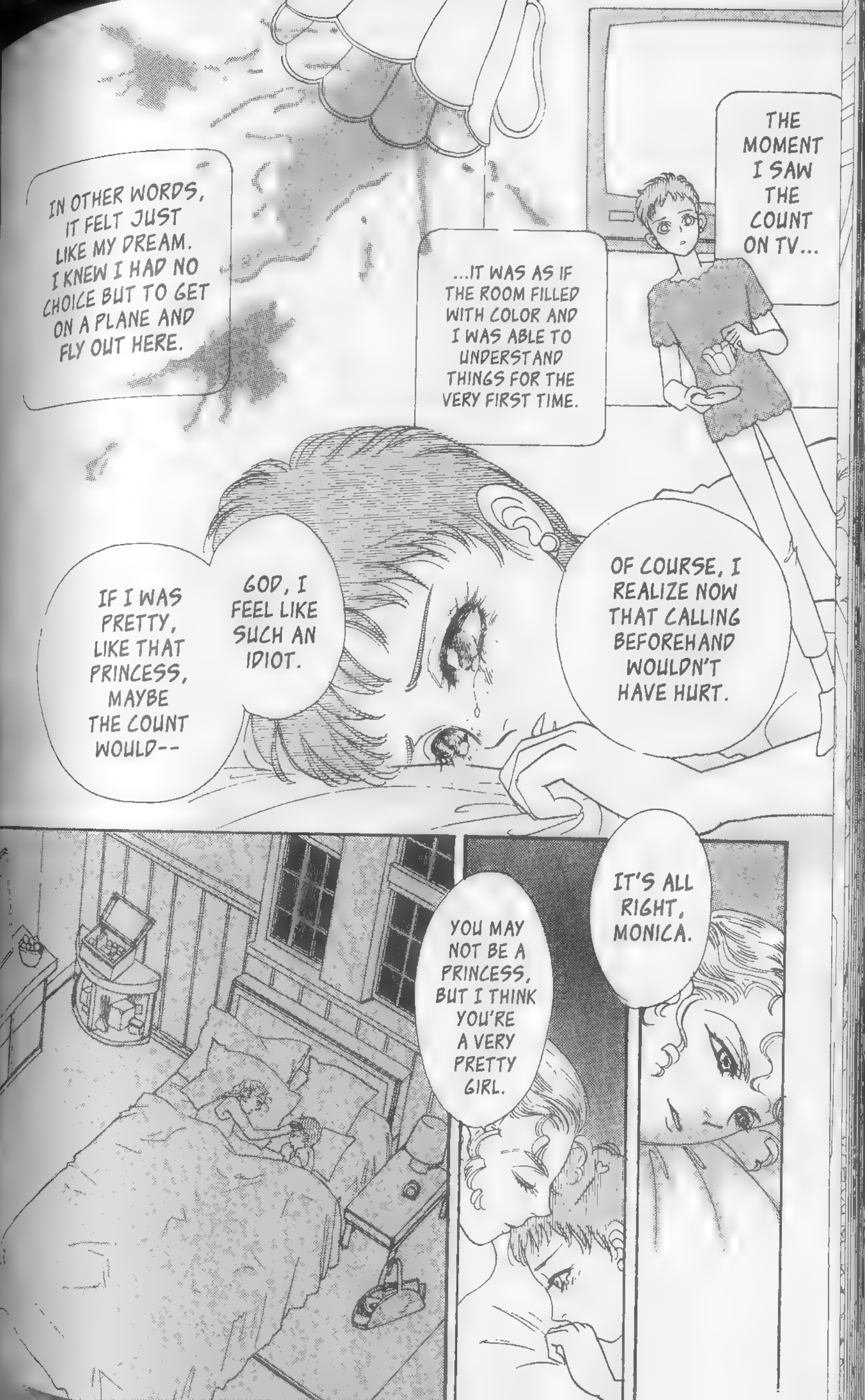

I SAW THE COUN- ON TV...
...AND I LOST IT.
THE NEXT MOMENT I WAS ON A PLANE TO L.A. ALL ALONE--EXCEPT FOR POCKY.
I BELIEVE THE TERM IS "LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT."
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
WE'VE...
...MET MANY TIMES BEFORE...IN MY DREAMS.
DREAMS?

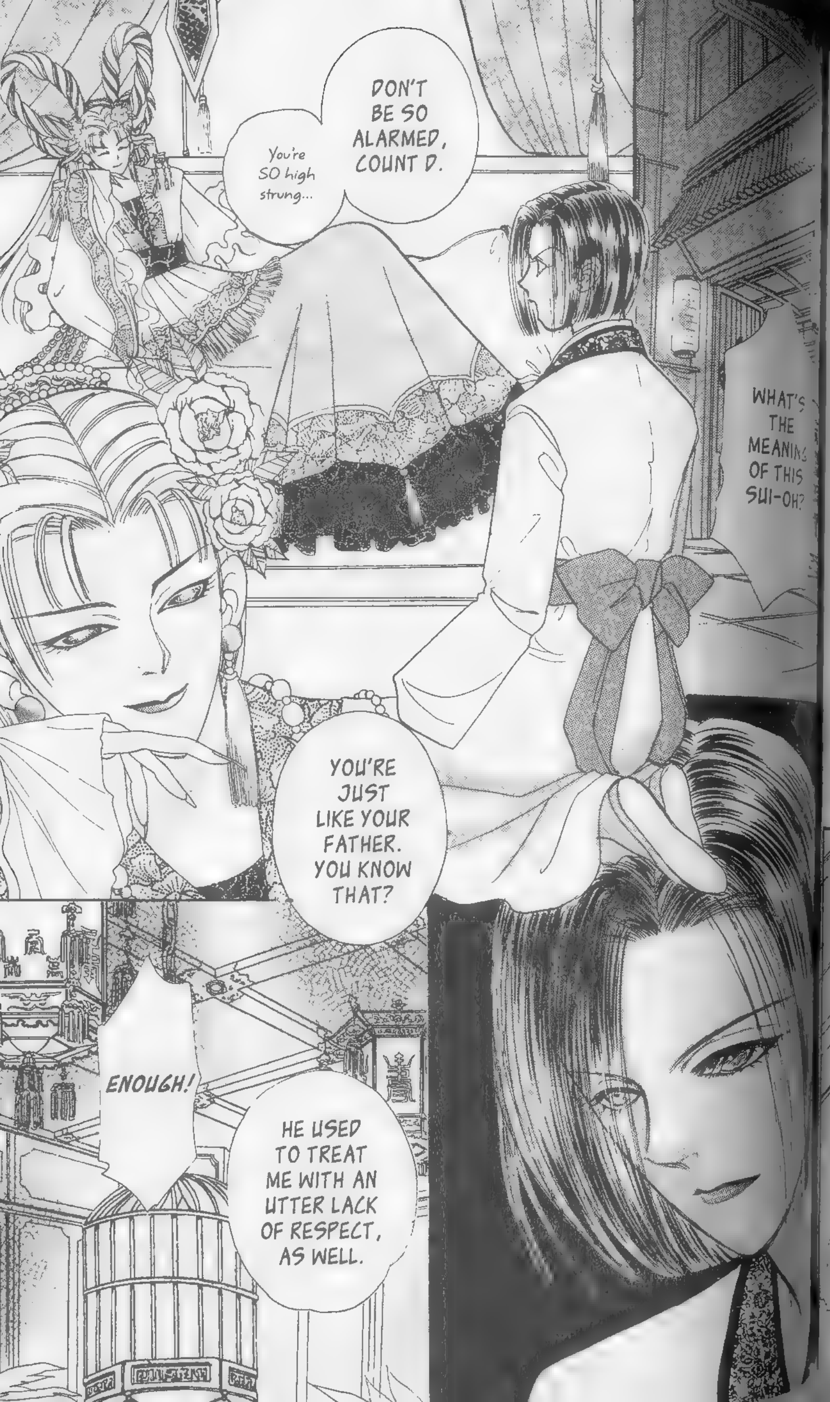

THE DREAMS STARTED WHEN I WAS VERY LITTLE.
SOMETIMES I'M IN AMERICA, OTHER TIMES I'M IN EUROPE, OCCASIONALLY I'LL BE IN A COUNTRY I DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE. THE TIME AND PLACE CHANGES OFTEN...
...AS DOES MY ROLE IN THE DREAM...
...BUT THE CHINESE MAN--HE'S ALWAYS THE SAME.
HE WEARS REALLY PRETTY CLOTHES...
...AND ALWAYS SMELLS LIKE A FLOWER BED.
HE HAS THIS AMAZING SMILE. SO BEAUTIFUL.
AND HE'S ALWAYS EATING SWEETS!
HA HA!
DEFINITELY THE COUNT.

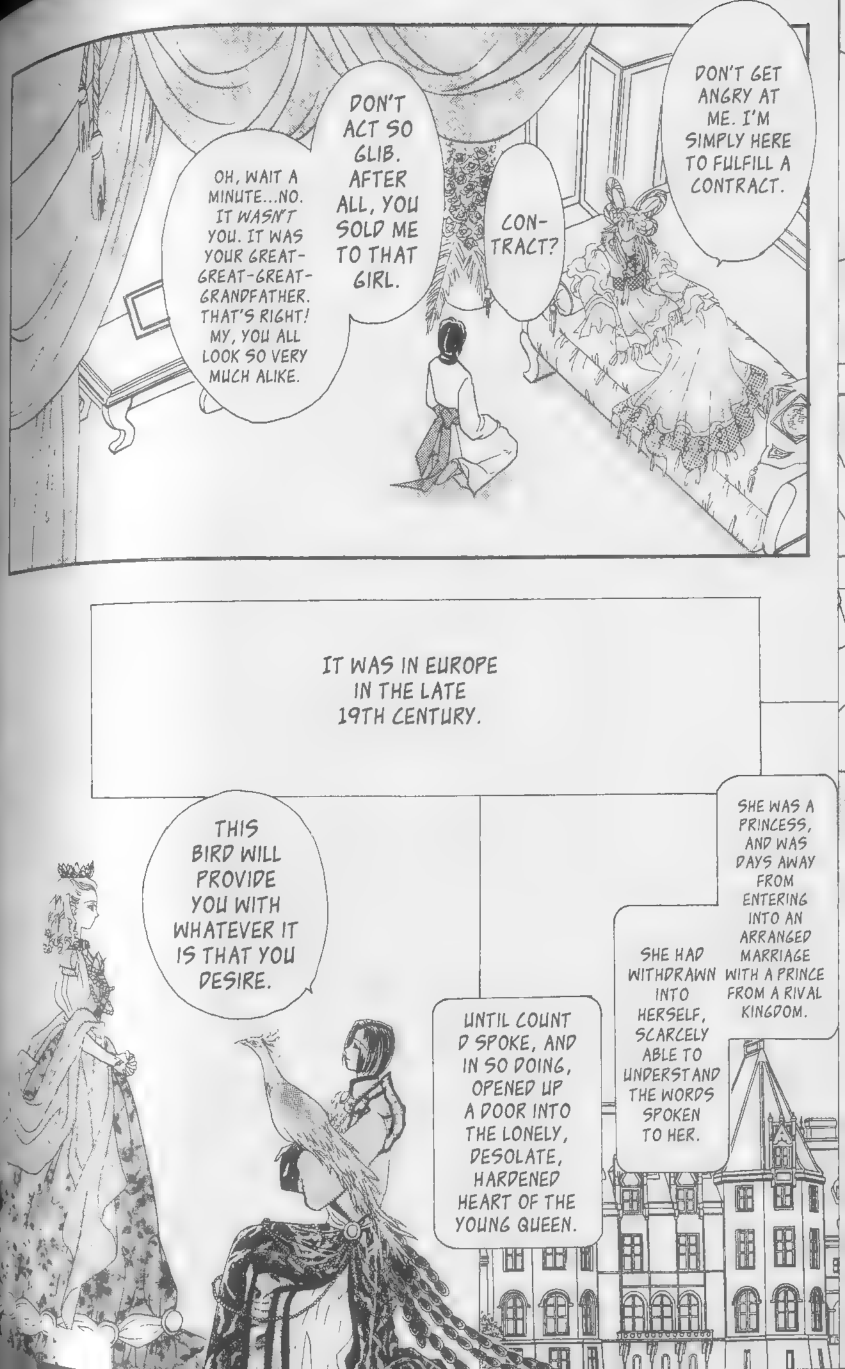

YOU SAID YOUR ROLE CHANGES WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT?
WELL, ONE OF THE DREAMS TAKES PLACE A LONG TIME AGO.
I'M LIVING IN A HUGE CASTLE...
...AND I'M DRESSED BEAUTIFULLY, LIKE SOME SORT OF PRINCESS.
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS, THE DRESS I'M WEARING, IT'S SO HEAVY THAT I CAN BARELY MOVE!
EVERYONE ELSE IS DRESSED EVEN MORE ODDLY THAN AM. THEY'RE A WEARING MAS AND WHISPER
(NOT THAT ASKING THEM TO SPEAK UP WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT LANGUAGE THEY'RE SPEAKING, BUT IT'S NOT ENGLISH.)
THE WHOLE THING'S INCREDIBLY BORING...
...UNTIL...

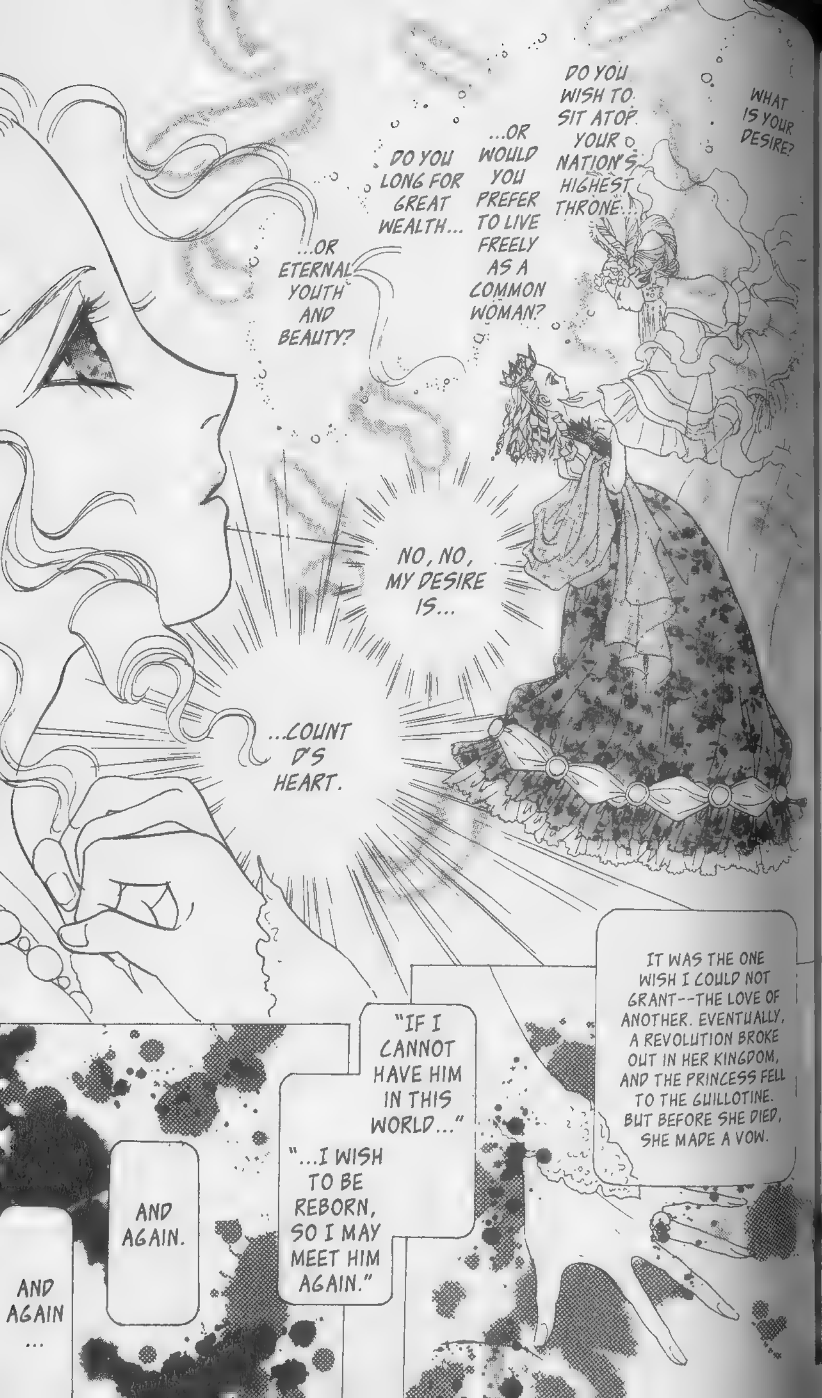

...COUNT D SHOWS UP WITH THIS MAGNIFICENT, RAINBOW-COLORED BIRD.
ALL OF A SUDDEN, THE ROOM ERUPTS INTO COLOR.
SUDDENLY I FIND THAT I'M ABLE TO UNDERSTAND EVERYONE.
MARQUIS DEFORD'S WIFE HAS A NEW LOVER?
OF COURSE! ARE YOU SURPRISED?
YES, HE POSSESSES A REMARKABLE ASSORTMENT OF BEASTS. MOST ARE FROM THE ORIENT, BUT NOT ALL.

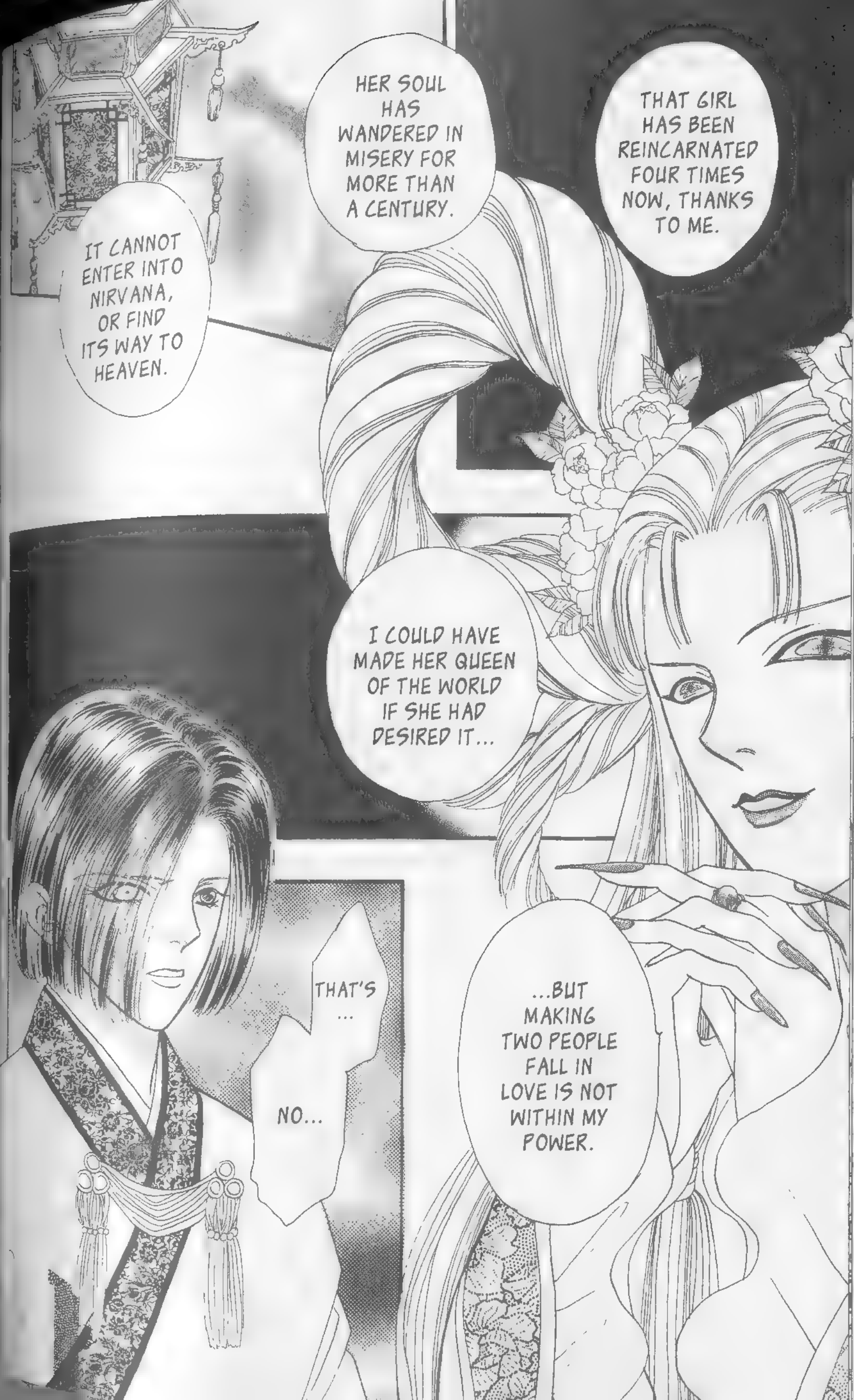

THE COUN- KNEELS RESPECTF... BEFORE M
IN CHINESE, THE NAME OF THIS BIRD IS ALSO THE WORD USED TO DESCRIBE THE COLOR OF YOUR EYES.
I'M SPEECHLESS. I TRY TO REPLY TO THE COUNT, BUT IT'S AS IF MY VOICE HAS DISAPPEARED.
THE MORE I TRY TO SPEAK, THE MORE FRUSTRATED I GET. I BEGIN TO SWEAT.
THEN I START FEELING A TIGHTNESS IN MY CHEST.
THAT'S USUALL WHEN I WAKE U
I'VE BEEN A STUDENT LIVING IN GERMANY DURING WWII...
SOME SORT OF MESSENGER MAKING MY WAY THROUGH THE MUD-CAKED STREETS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA...
THE ONLY THING THAT REMAINS CONSISTENT IN THE DREAMS, THE ONLY THING THAT FEELS REAL, IS COUNT D.

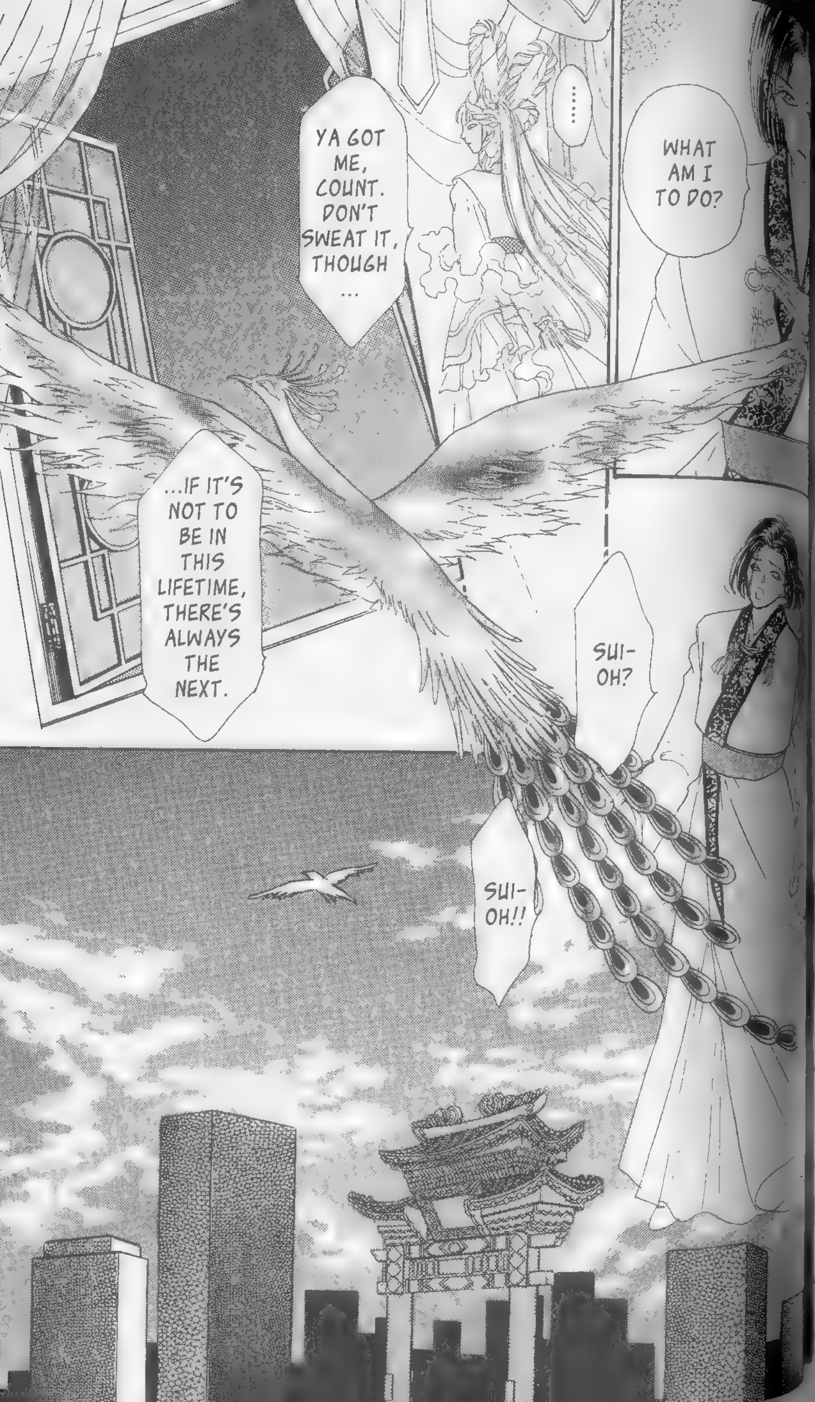

THE MOMENT I SAW THE COUNT ON TV...
...IT WAS AS IF THE ROOM FILLED WITH COLOR AND I WAS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THINGS FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT FELT JUST LIKE MY DREAM. I KNEW I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GET ON A PLANE AND FLY OUT HERE.
OF COURSE, I REALIZE NOW THAT CALLING BEFOREHAND WOULDN'T HAVE HURT.
GOD, I FEEL LIKE SUCH AN IDIOT.
IF I WAS PRETTY, LIKE THAT PRINCESS, MAYBE THE COUNT WOULD--
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MONICA.
YOU MAY NOT BE A PRINCESS, BUT I THINK YOU'RE A VERY PRETTY GIRL.

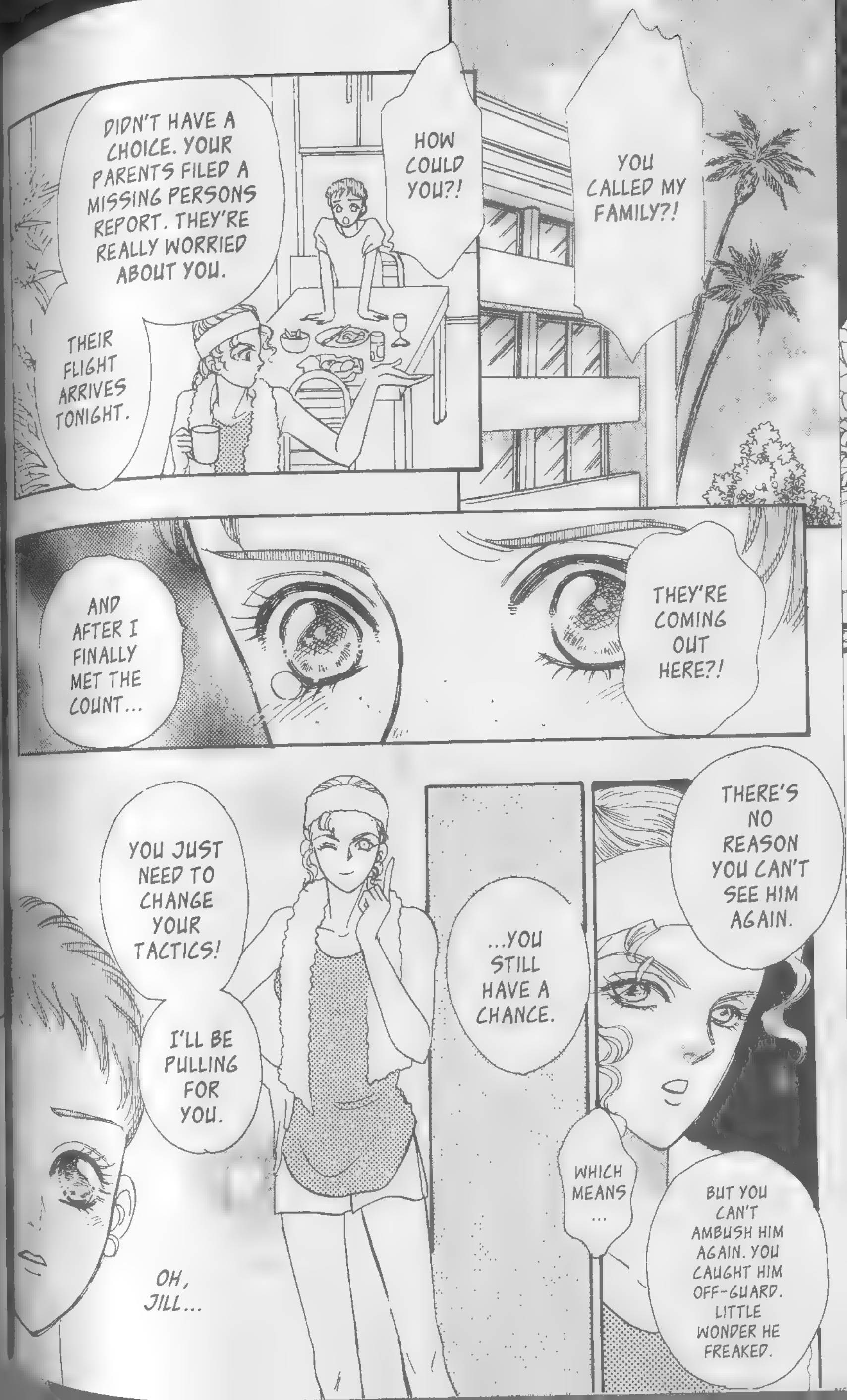

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS SUI-OH?
DON'T BE SO ALARMED, COUNT D.
You're SO high strung...
YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER. YOU KNOW THAT?
ENOUGH!
HE USED TO TREAT ME WITH AN UTTER LACK OF RESPECT, AS WELL.

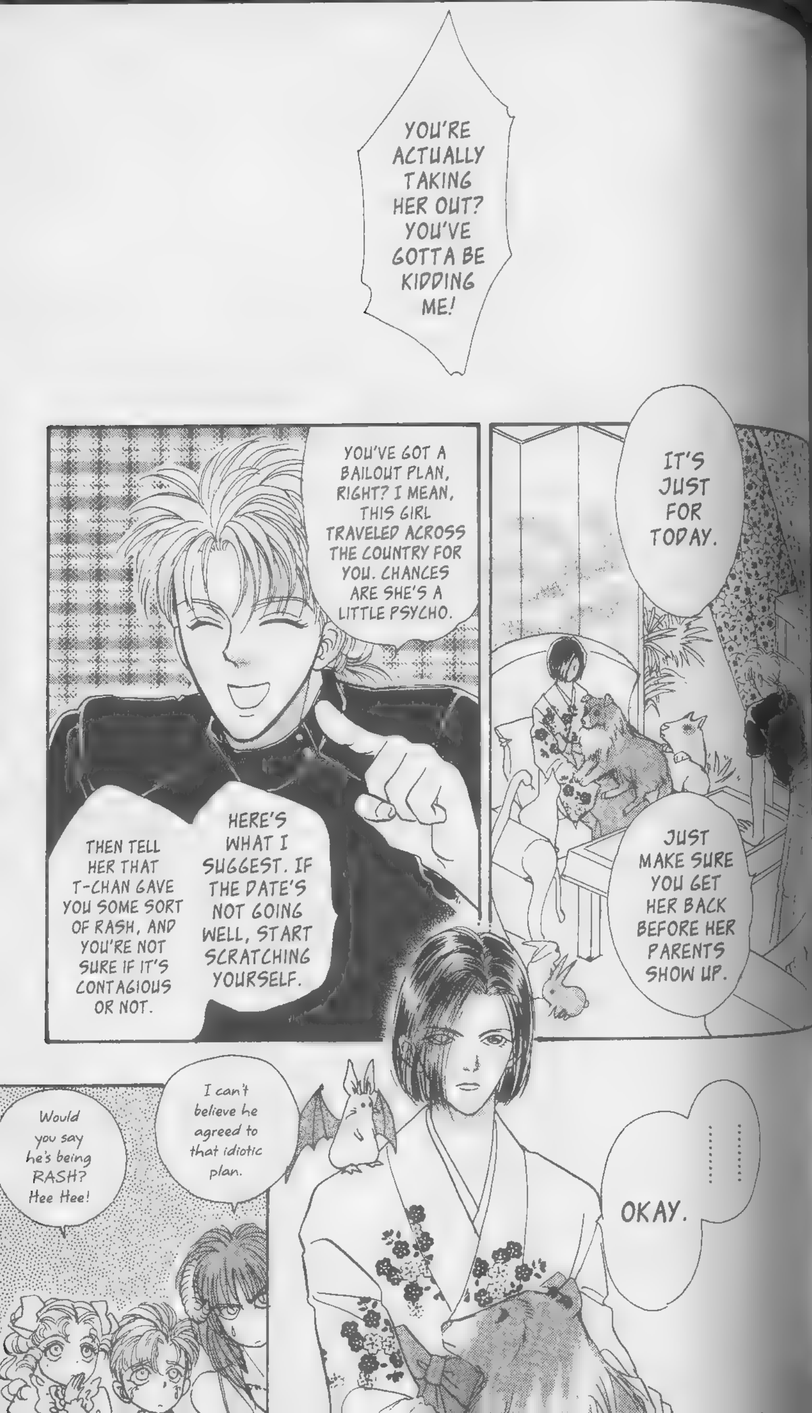

DON'T GET ANGRY AT ME. I'M SIMPLY HERE TO FULFILL A CONTRACT.
CONTRACT?
DON'T ACT SO GLIB. AFTER ALL, YOU SOLD ME TO THAT GIRL.
OH, WAIT A MINUTE...NO. IT WASN'T YOU. IT WAS YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER. THAT'S RIGHT! MY, YOU ALL LOOK SO VERY MUCH ALIKE.
IT WAS IN EUROPE IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY.
SHE WAS A PRINCESS, AND WAS DAYS AWAY FROM ENTERING INTO AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE WITH A PRINCE FROM A RIVAL KINGDOM.
SHE HAD WITHDRAWN INTO HERSELF, SCARCELY ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE WORDS SPOKEN TO HER.
UNTIL COUNT D SPOKE, AND IN SO DOING, OPENED UP A DOOR INTO THE LONELY, DESOLATE, HARDENED HEART OF THE YOUNG QUEEN.
THIS BIRD WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH WHATEVER IT IS THAT YOU DESIRE.

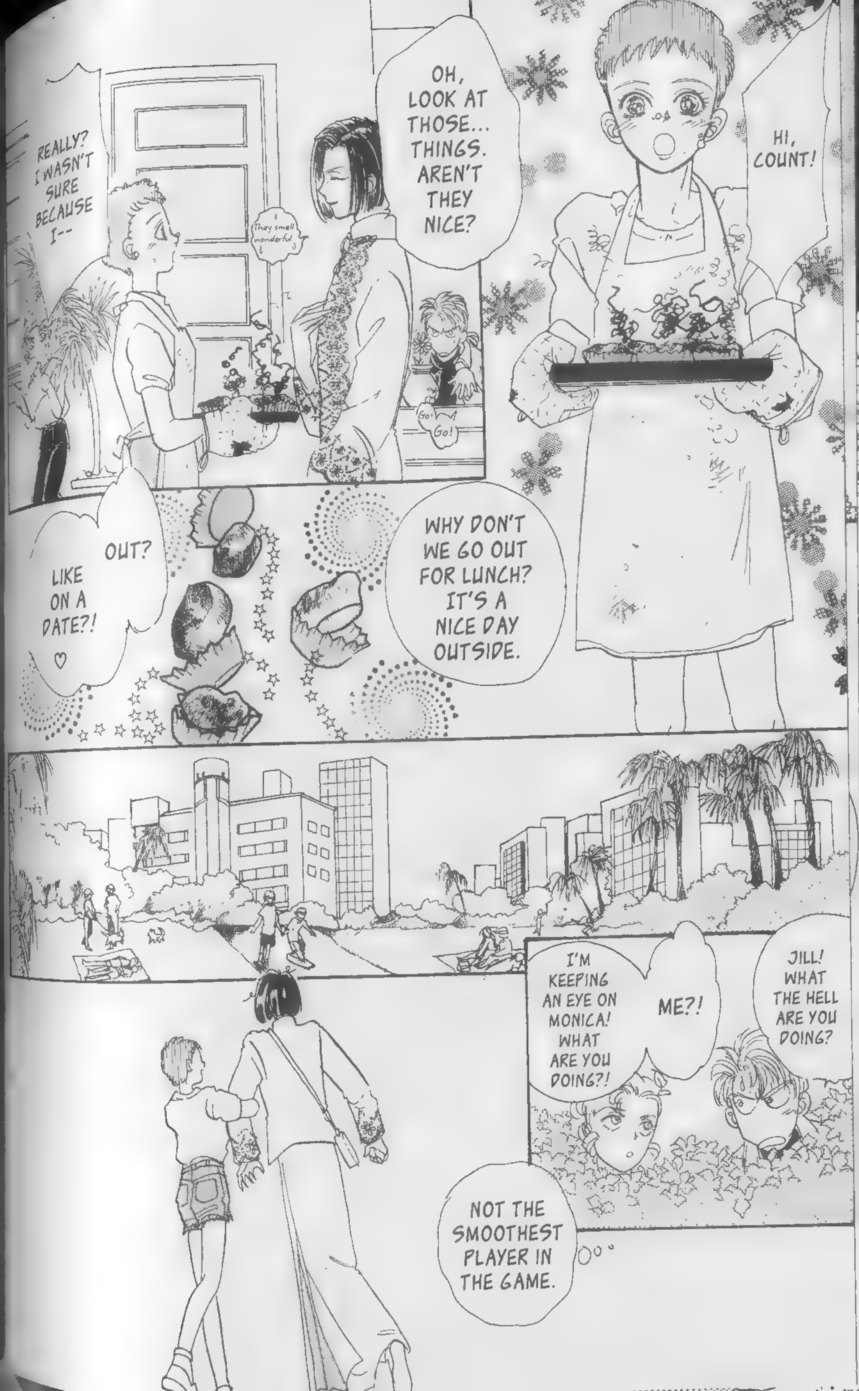

WHAT IS YOUR DESIRE?
DO YOU WISH TO SIT ATOP YOUR NATION'S HIGHEST THRONE...
...OR WOULD YOU PREFER TO LIVE FREELY AS A COMMON WOMAN?
DO YOU LONG FOR GREAT WEALTH...
...OR ETERNAL YOUTH AND BEAUTY?
NO, NO, MY DESIRE IS...
...COUNT D'S HEART.
IT WAS THE ONE WISH I COULD NOT GRANT--THE LOVE OF ANOTHER. EVENTUALLY, A REVOLUTION BROKE OUT IN HER KINGDOM, AND THE PRINCESS FELL TO THE GUILLOTINE. BUT BEFORE SHE DIED, SHE MADE A VOW.
"IF I CANNOT HAVE HIM IN THIS WORLD..."
"...I WISH TO BE REBORN, SO I MAY MEET HIM AGAIN."
AND AGAIN.
AND AGAIN ...

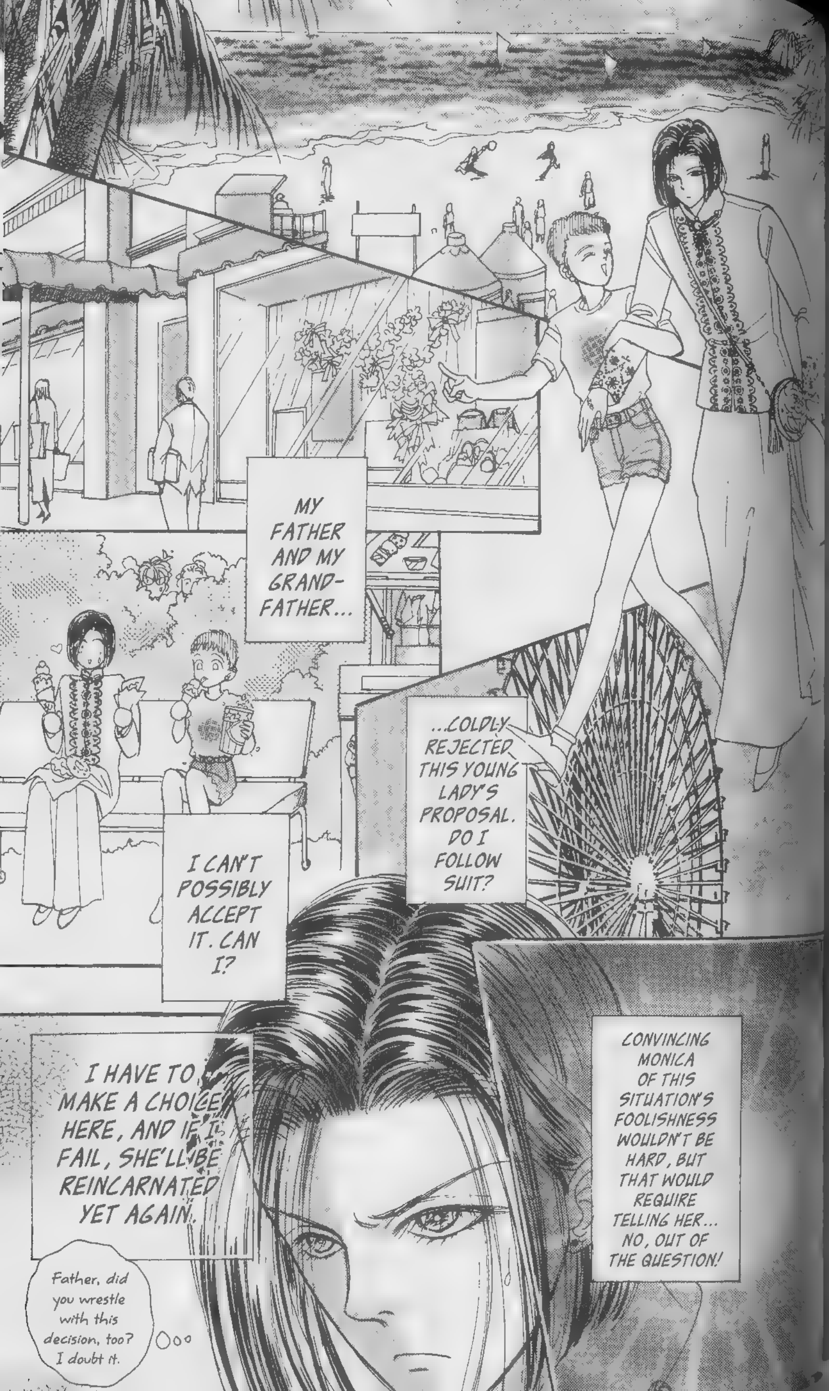

THAT GIRL HAS BEEN REINCARNATED FOUR TIMES NOW, THANKS TO ME.
HER SOUL HAS WANDERED IN MISERY FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY.
IT CANNOT ENTER INTO NIRVANA, OR FIND ITS WAY TO HEAVEN.
I COULD HAVE MADE HER QUEEN OF THE WORLD IF SHE HAD DESIRED IT...
...BUT MAKING TWO PEOPLE FALL IN LOVE IS NOT WITHIN MY POWER.
THAT'S ...
NO...

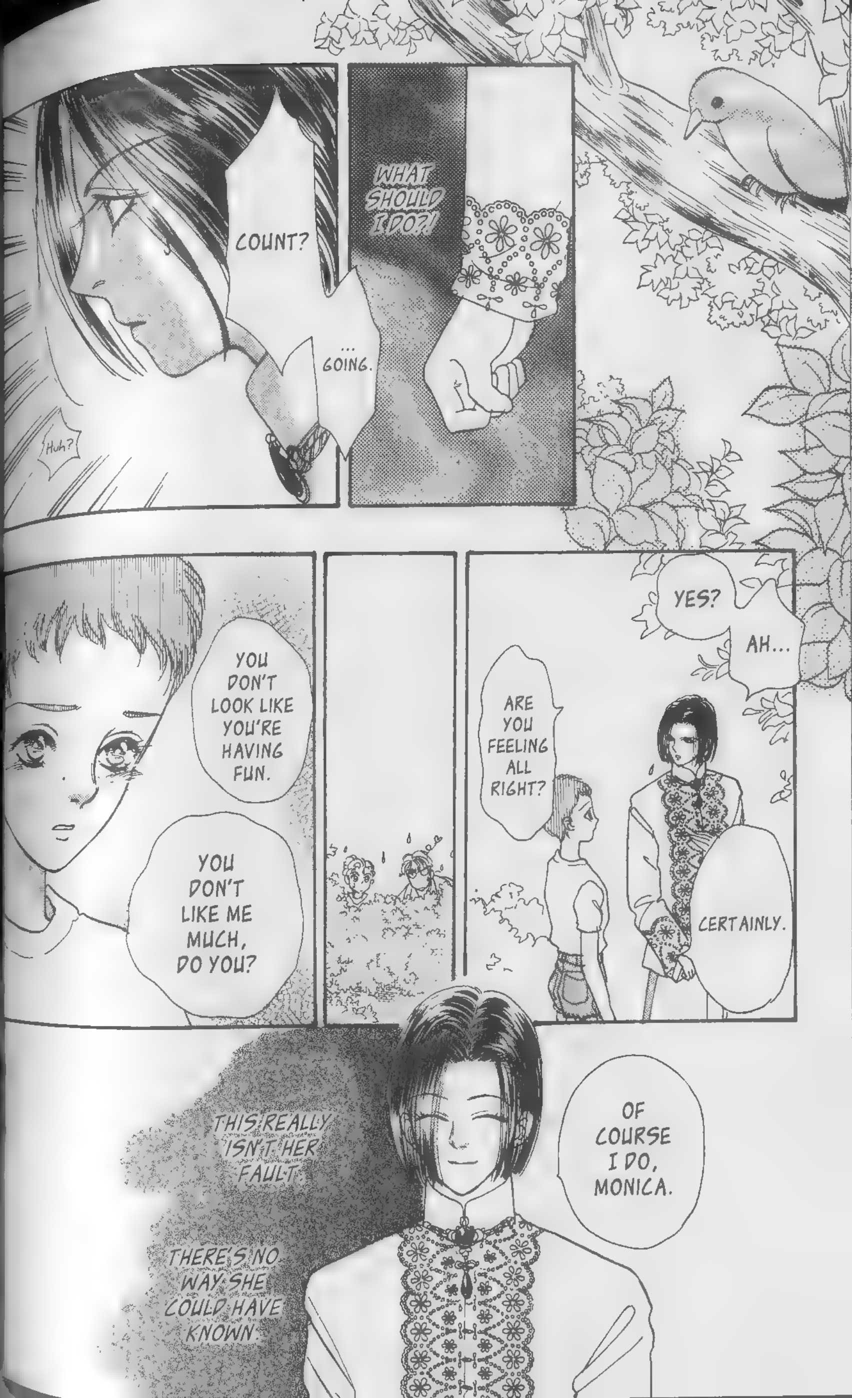

WHAT AM I TO DO?
......
YA GOT ME, COUNT. DON'T SWEAT IT, THOUGH ...
...IF IT'S NOT TO BE IN THIS LIFETIME, THERE'S ALWAYS THE NEXT.
SUI-OH?
SUI-OH!!

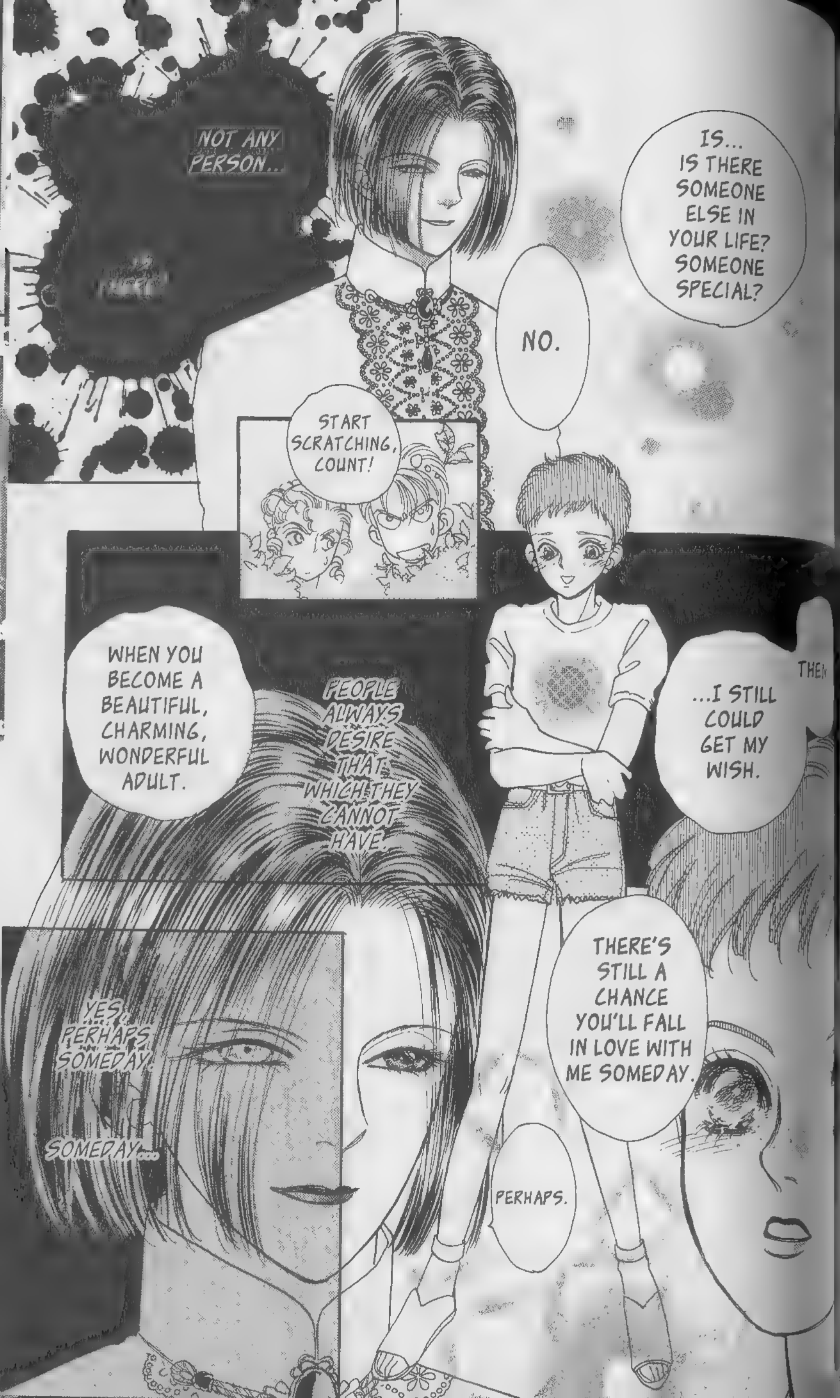

YOU CALLED MY FAMILY?!
HOW COULD YOU?!
DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE. YOUR PARENTS FILED A MISSING PERSONS REPORT. THEY'RE REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
THEIR FLIGHT ARRIVES TONIGHT.
THEY'RE COMING OUT HERE?!
AND AFTER I FINALLY MET THE COUNT...
THERE'S NO REASON YOU CAN'T SEE HIM AGAIN.
...YOU STILL HAVE A CHANCE.
WHICH MEANS ...
BUT YOU CAN'T AMBUSH HIM AGAIN. YOU CAUGHT HIM OFF-GUARD. LITTLE WONDER HE FREAKED.
YOU JUST NEED TO CHANGE YOUR TACTICS!
I'LL BE PULLING FOR YOU.
OH, JILL...

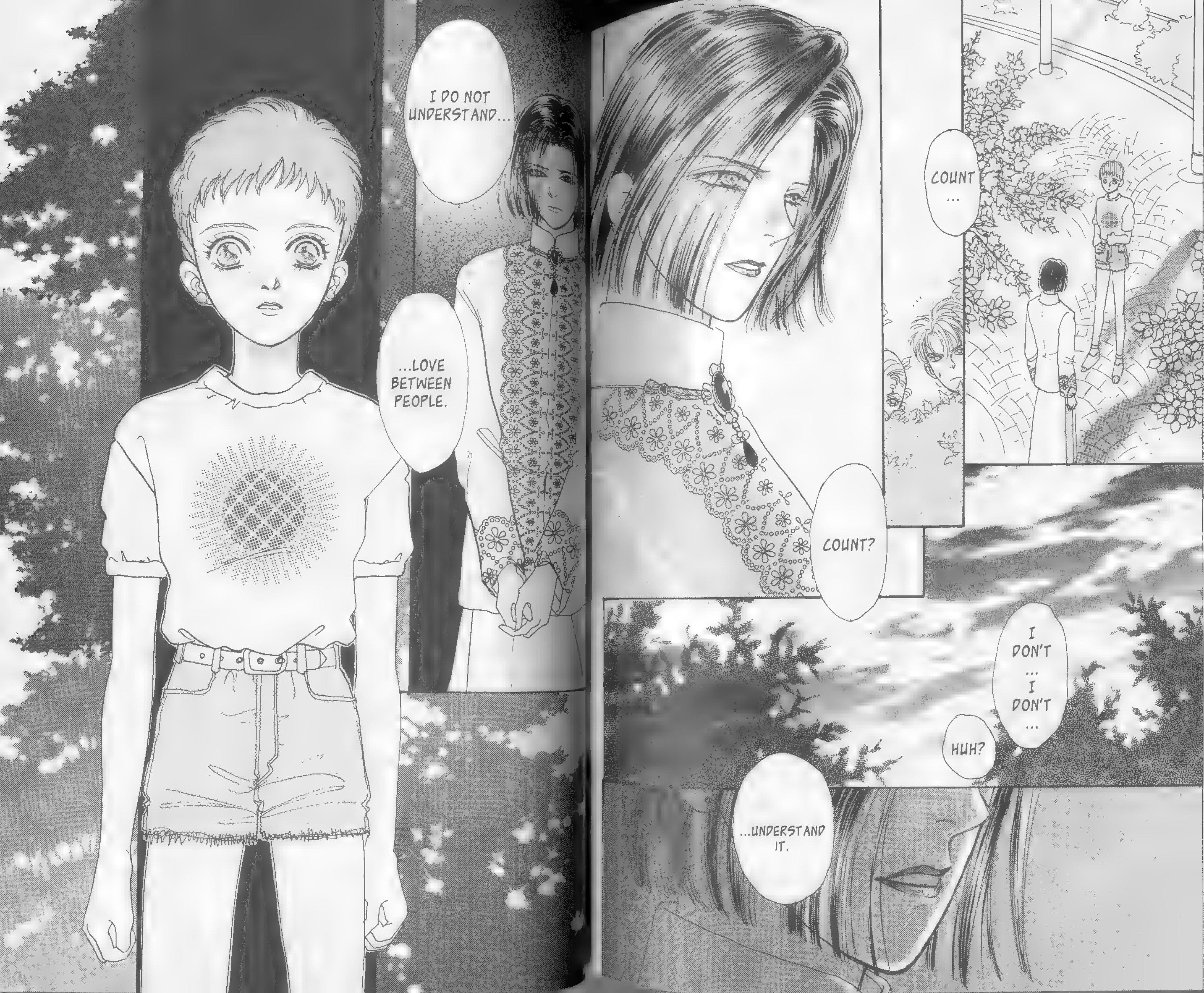

YOU'RE ACTUALLY TAKING HER OUT? YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!
IT'S JUST FOR TODAY.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU GET HER BACK BEFORE HER PARENTS SHOW UP.
YOU'VE GOT A BAILOUT PLAN, RIGHT? I MEAN, THIS GIRL TRAVELED ACROSS THE COUNTRY FOR YOU. CHANCES ARE SHE'S A LITTLE PSYCHO.
HERE'S WHAT I SUGGEST. IF THE DATE'S NOT GOING WELL, START SCRATCHING YOURSELF.
THEN TELL HER THAT T-CHAN GAVE YOU SOME SORT OF RASH, AND YOU'RE NOT SURE IF IT'S CONTAGIOUS OR NOT.
......
OKAY.
I can't believe he agreed to that idiotic plan.
Would you say he's being RASH? Hee Hee!

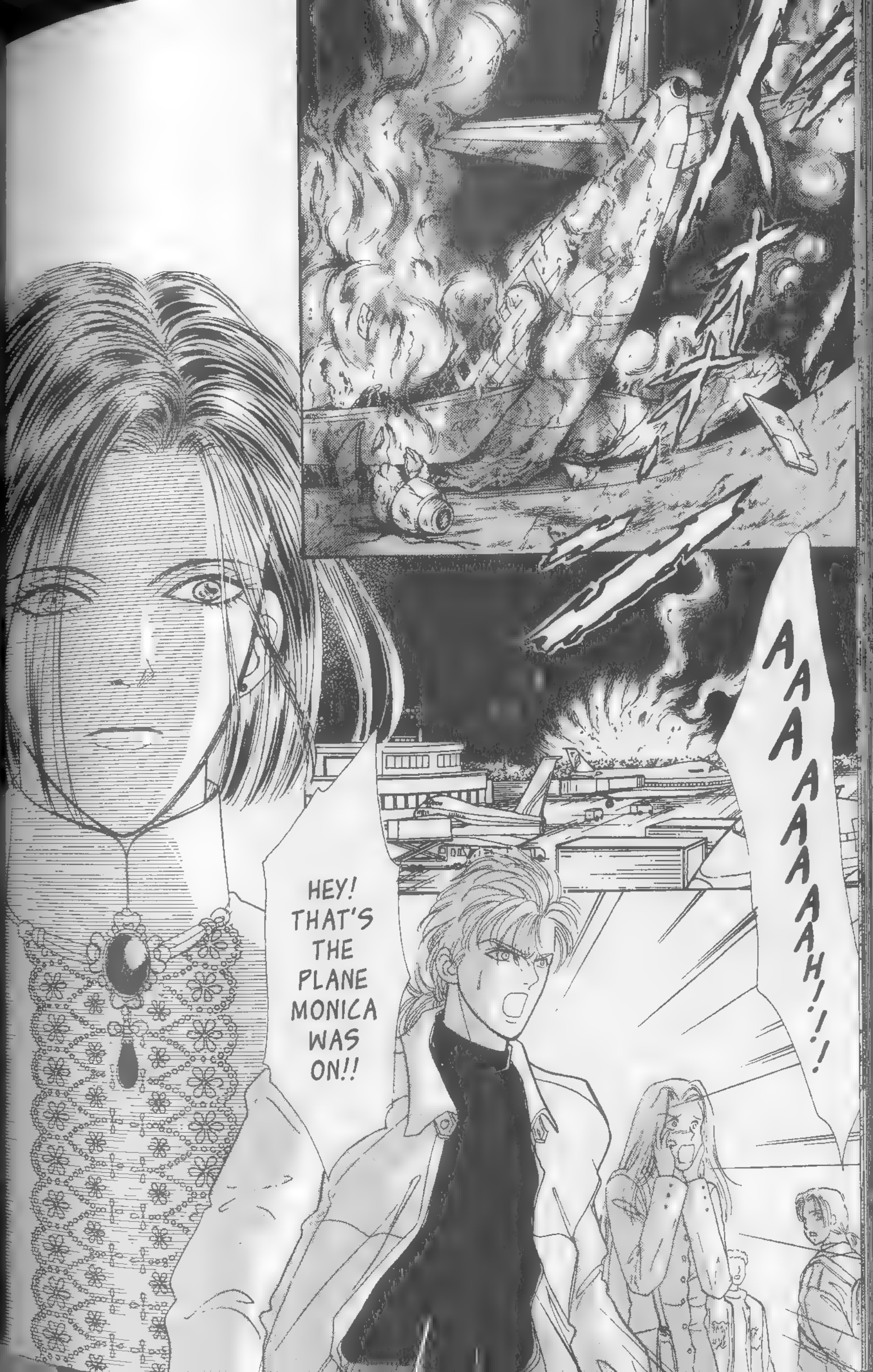

HI, COUNT!
OH, LOOK AT THOSE... THINGS. AREN'T THEY NICE?
REALLY? I WASN'T SURE BECAUSE I--
They smell wonderful
Go! Go!
WHY DON'T WE GO OUT FOR LUNCH? IT'S A NICE DAY OUTSIDE.
OUT?
LIKE ON A DATE?! ♡
JILL! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
ME?!
I'M KEEPING AN EYE ON MONICA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
NOT THE SMOOTHEST PLAYER IN THE GAME.

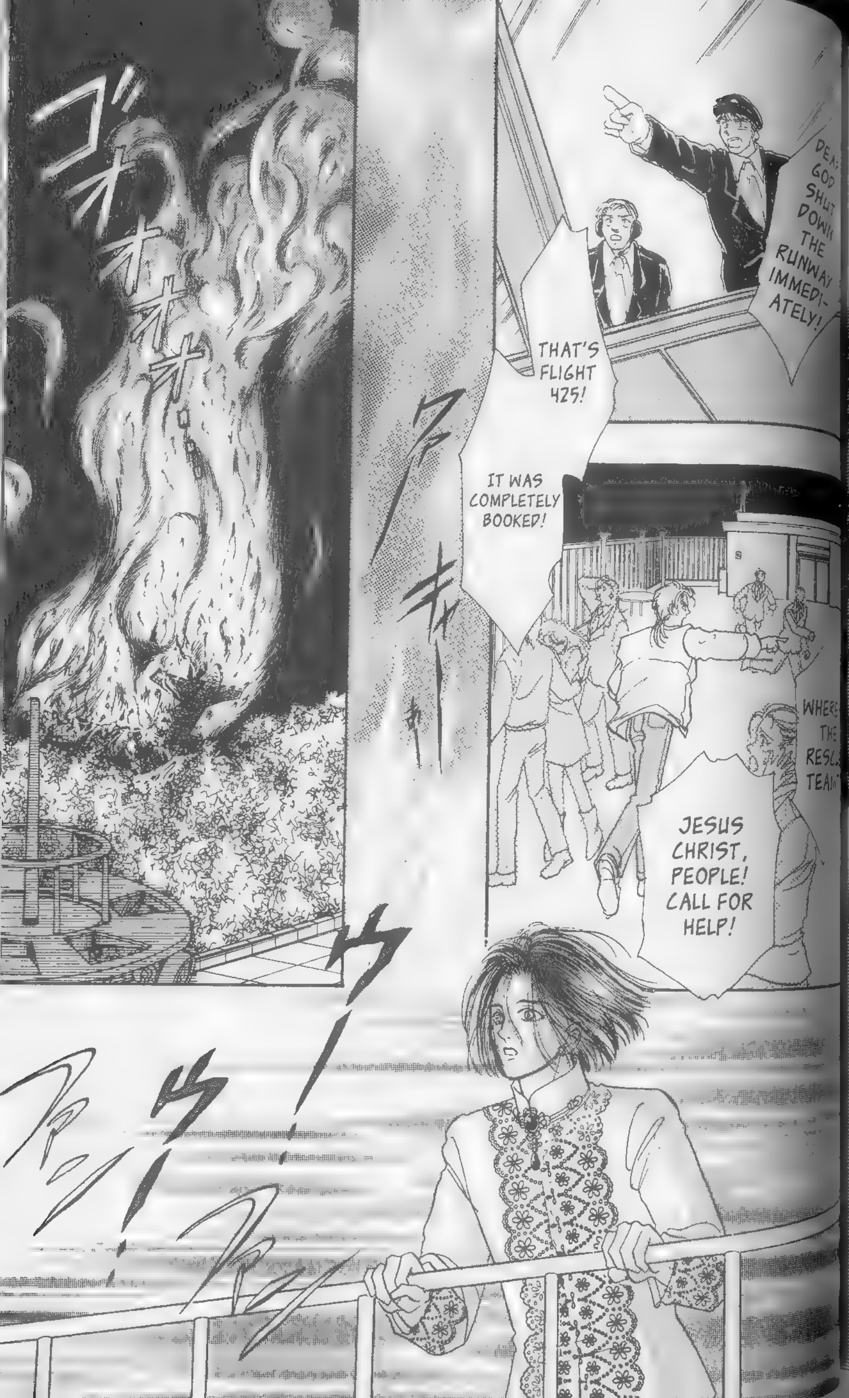

MY FATHER AND MY GRANDFATHER...
...COLDLY REJECTED THIS YOUNG LADY'S PROPOSAL. DO I FOLLOW SUIT?
I CAN'T POSSIBLY ACCEPT IT. CAN I?
CONVINCING MONICA OF THIS SITUATION'S FOOLISHNESS WOULDN'T BE HARD, BUT THAT WOULD REQUIRE TELLING HER... NO, OUT OF THE QUESTION!
I HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE HERE, AND IF I FAIL, SHE'LL BE REINCARNATED YET AGAIN.
Father, did you wrestle with this decision, too? I doubt it.

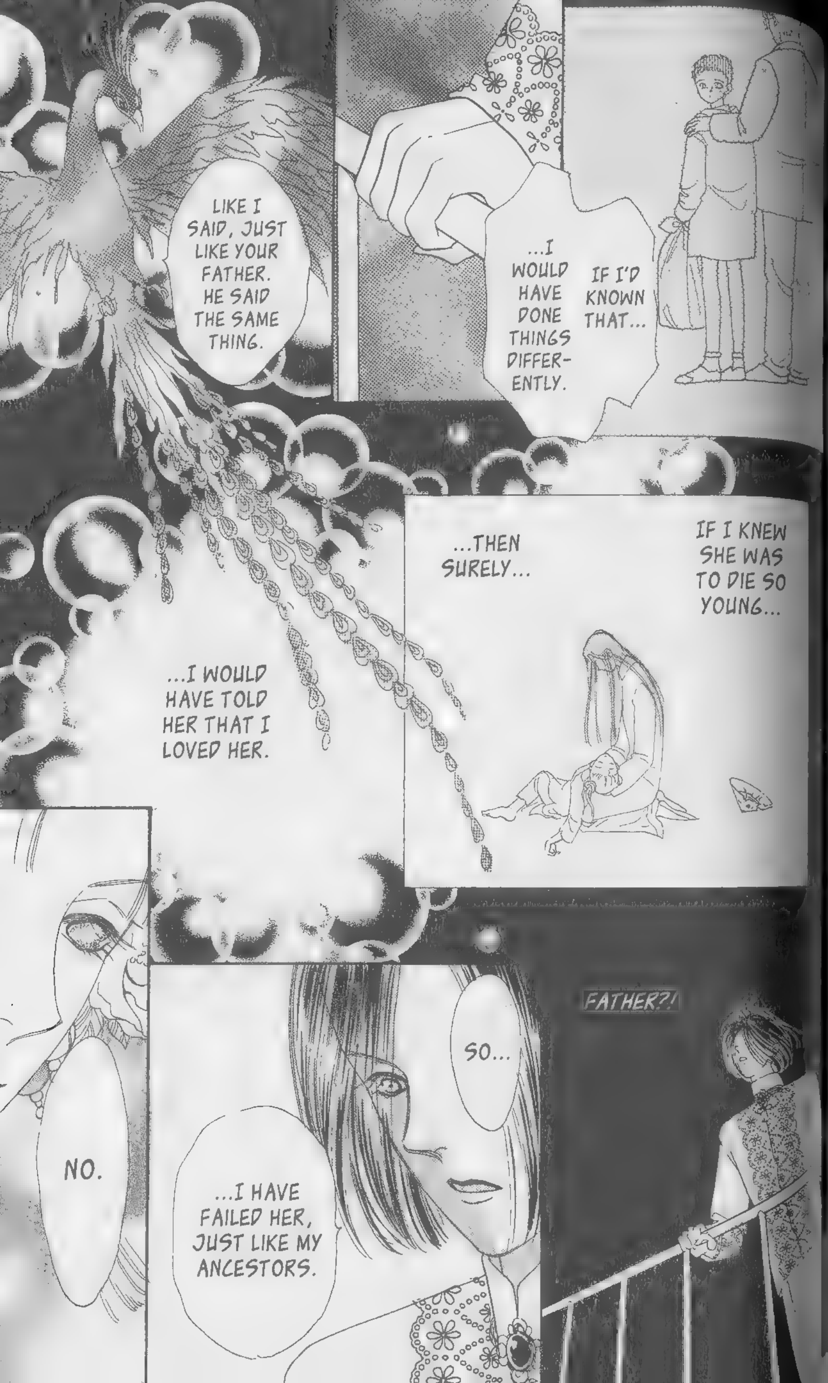

WHAT SHOULD I DO?!
COUNT?
...GOING.
Huh?
YES?
AH...
ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?
CERTAINLY.
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN.
YOU DON'T LIKE ME MUCH, DO YOU?
OF COURSE I DO, MONICA.
THIS REALLY ISN'T HER FAULT.
THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD HAVE KNOWN.

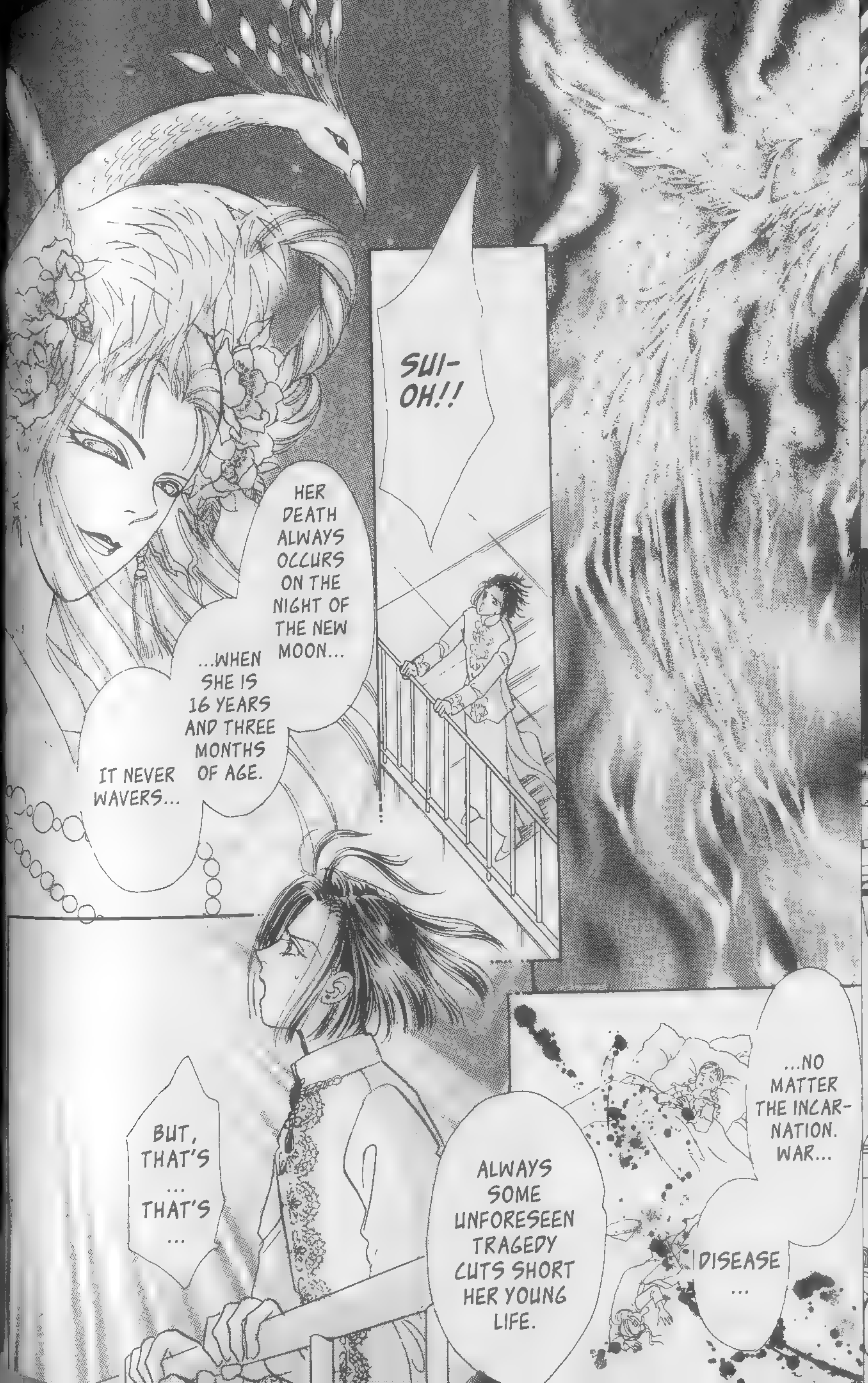

IS... IS THERE SOMEONE ELSE IN YOUR LIFE? SOMEONE SPECIAL?
NO.
NOT ANY PERSON...
START SCRATCHING, COUNT!
THE
...I STILL COULD GET MY WISH.
WHEN YOU BECOME A BEAUTIFUL, CHARMING, WONDERFUL ADULT.
PEOPLE ALWAYS DESIRE THAT WHICH THEY CANNOT HAVE.
THERE'S STILL A CHANCE YOU'LL FALL IN LOVE WITH ME SOMEDAY.
PERHAPS.
YES. PERHAPS SOMEDAY.
SOMEDAY...

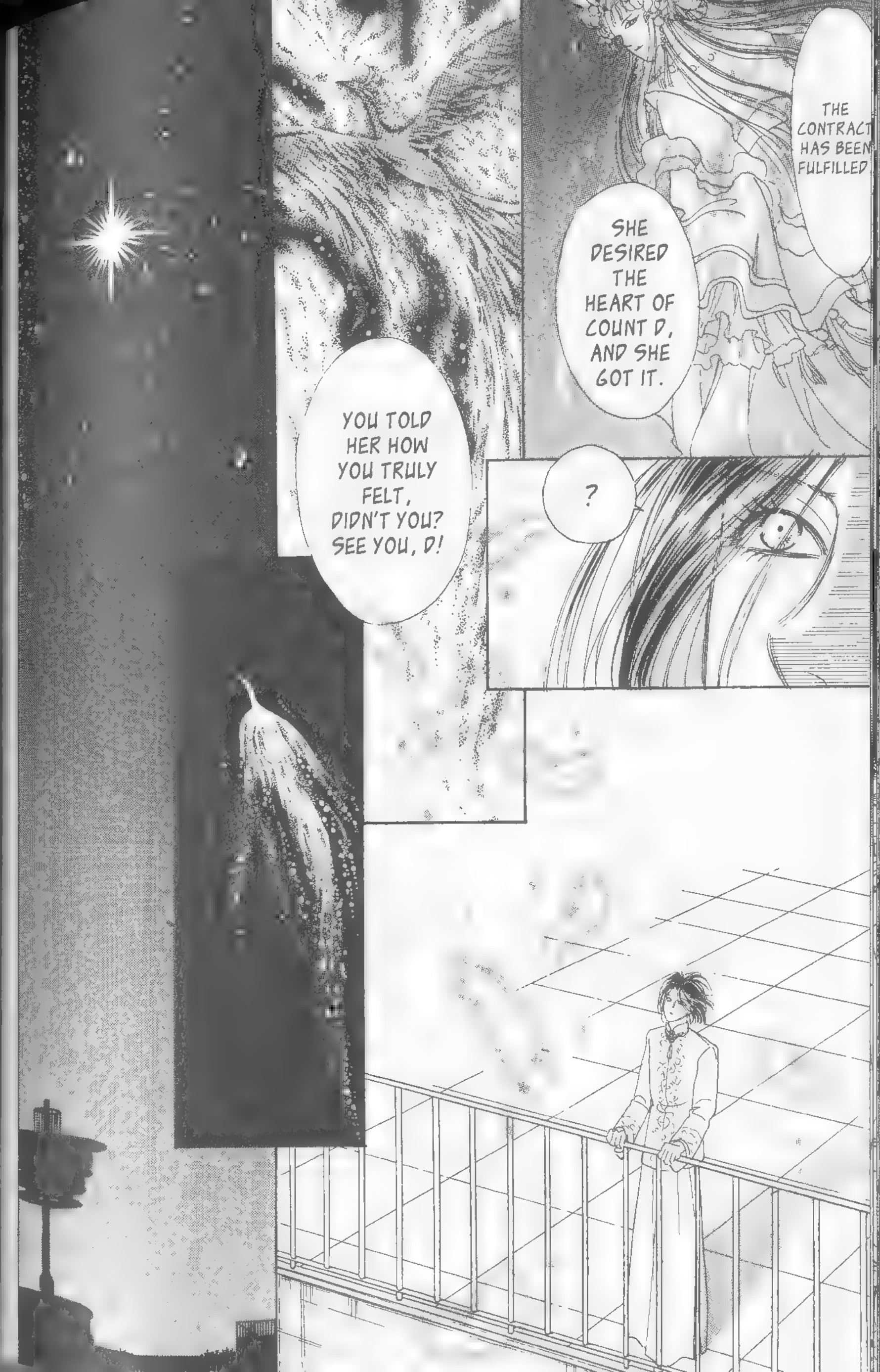

COUNT …
COUNT?
I DON'T … I DON'T …
HUH?
…UNDERSTAND IT.
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND…
…LOVE BETWEEN PEOPLE.

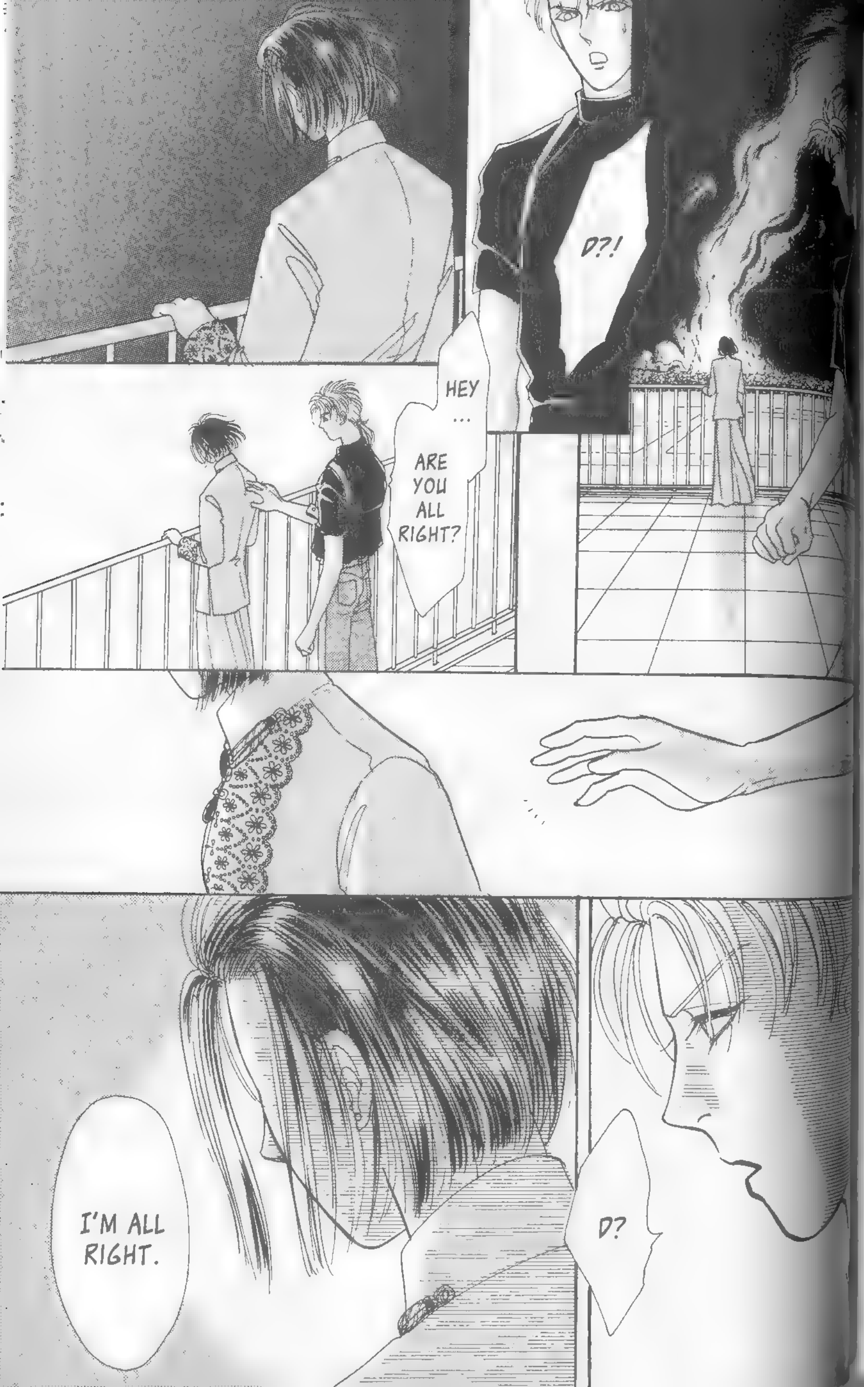

HEY! THAT'S THE PLANE MONICA WAS ON!!
AAAAAAAAAAH!!!


DEA GOD SHUT DOWN THE RUNWAY IMMEDIATELY!
THAT'S FLIGHT 425!
IT WAS COMPLETELY BOOKED!
WHERE THE RESCU TEAM
JESUS CHRIST, PEOPLE! CALL FOR HELP!
ゴオオオオ
ワァ
キャー
ウー！ウー！
ファンファン


LIKE I SAID, JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER. HE SAID THE SAME THING.
IF I'D KNOWN THAT...
...I WOULD HAVE DONE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.
IF I KNEW SHE WAS TO DIE SO YOUNG...
...THEN SURELY...
...I WOULD HAVE TOLD HER THAT I LOVED HER.
SO...
NO.
...I HAVE FAILED HER, JUST LIKE MY ANCESTORS.
FATHER?!


SUI-OH!!
HER DEATH ALWAYS OCCURS ON THE NIGHT OF THE NEW MOON...
...WHEN SHE IS 16 YEARS AND THREE MONTHS OF AGE.
IT NEVER WAVERS...
BUT, THAT'S ... THAT'S ...
ALWAYS SOME UNFORESEEN TRAGEDY CUTS SHORT HER YOUNG LIFE.
...NO MATTER THE INCARNATION. WAR...
DISEASE ...

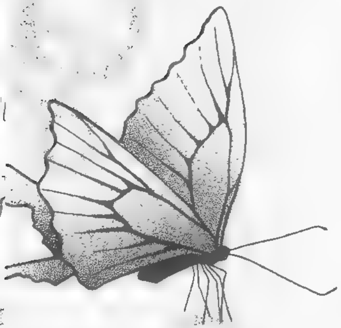

THE CONTRACT HAS BEEN FULFILLED
SHE DESIRED THE HEART OF COUNT D, AND SHE GOT IT.
YOU TOLD HER HOW YOU TRULY FELT, DIDN'T YOU? SEE YOU, D!
?


D?!
HEY ... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
D?
I'M ALL RIGHT.

PET CATALOG

ペットカタログ

NO.9

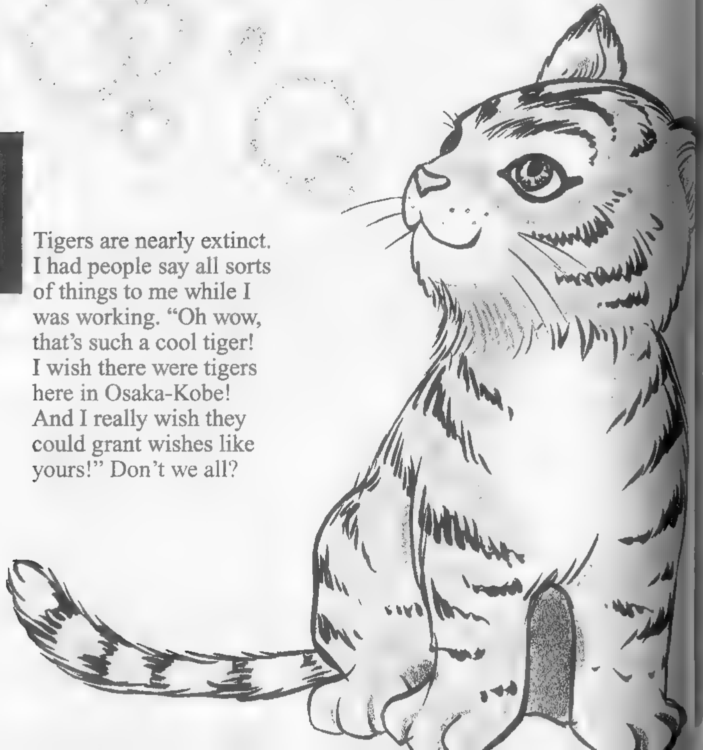


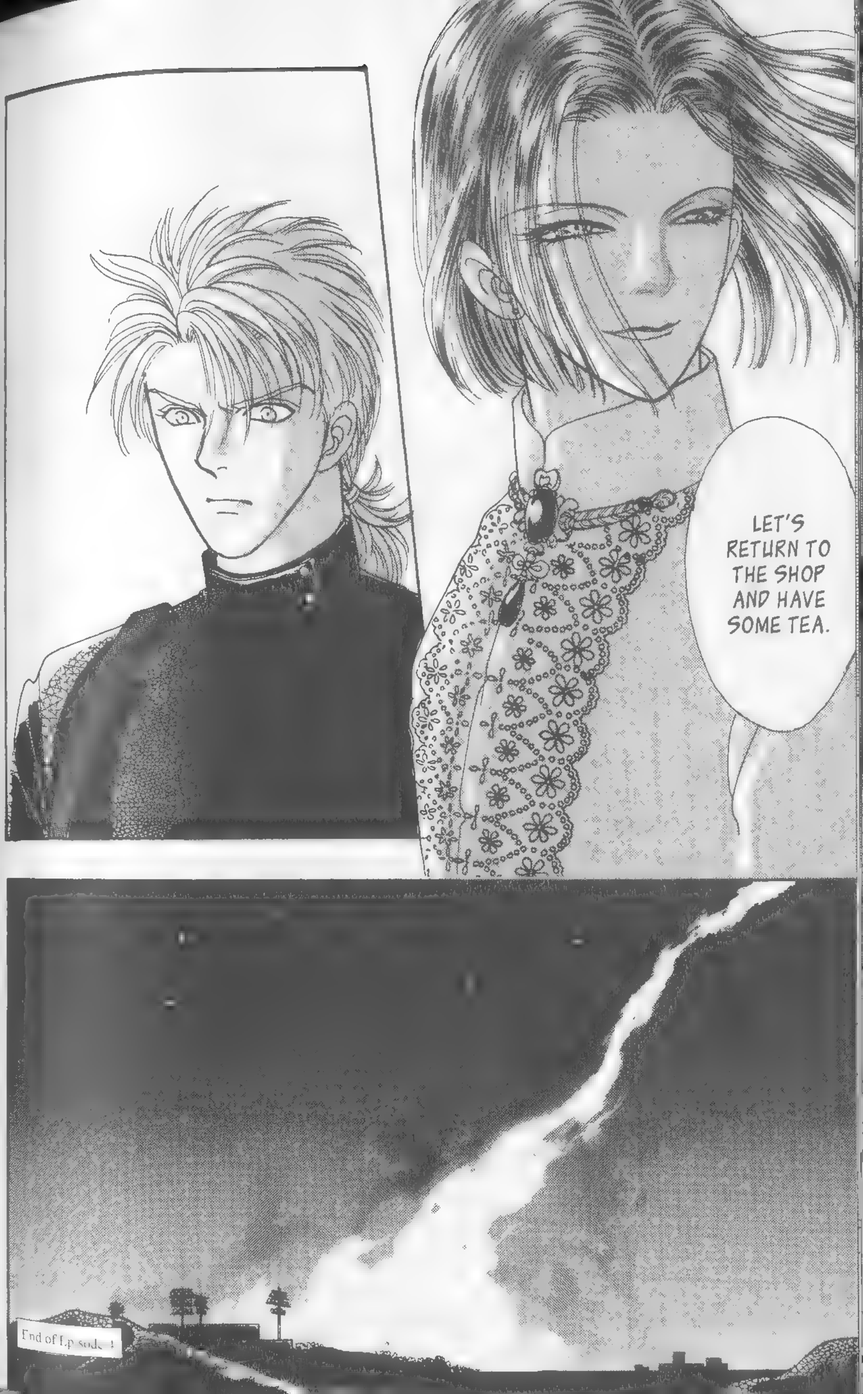
Butterfly

Monarchs are rather large butterflies with a wingspan of up to eight inches. Watching one or two flutter by is nice, but when you see a huge flock of them, it's actually kind of scary. Those full-page butterfly scenes were giving me nightmares when I was drawing them.

Tiger

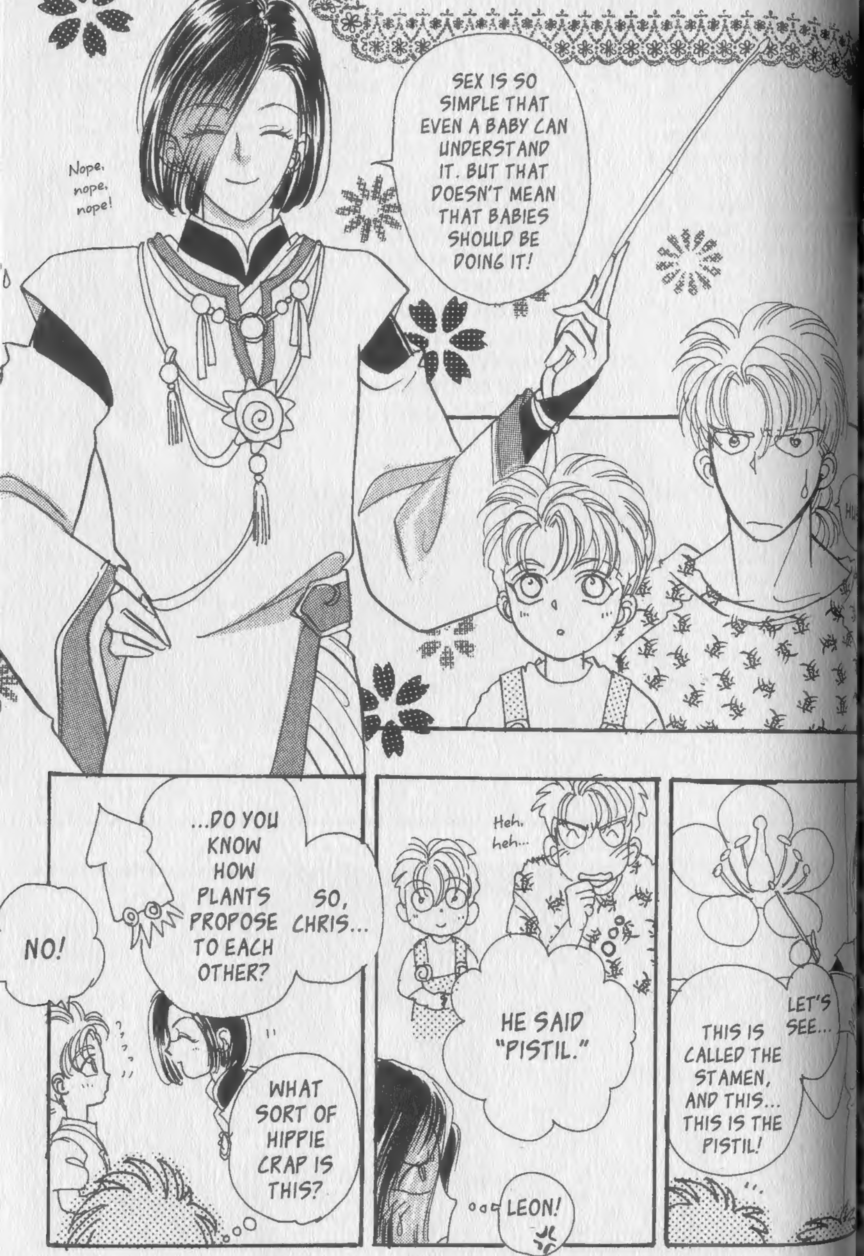
Tigers are nearly extinct. I had people say all sorts of things to me while I was working. "Oh wow, that's such a cool tiger! I wish there were tigers here in Osaka-Kobe! And I really wish they could grant wishes like yours!" Don't we all?





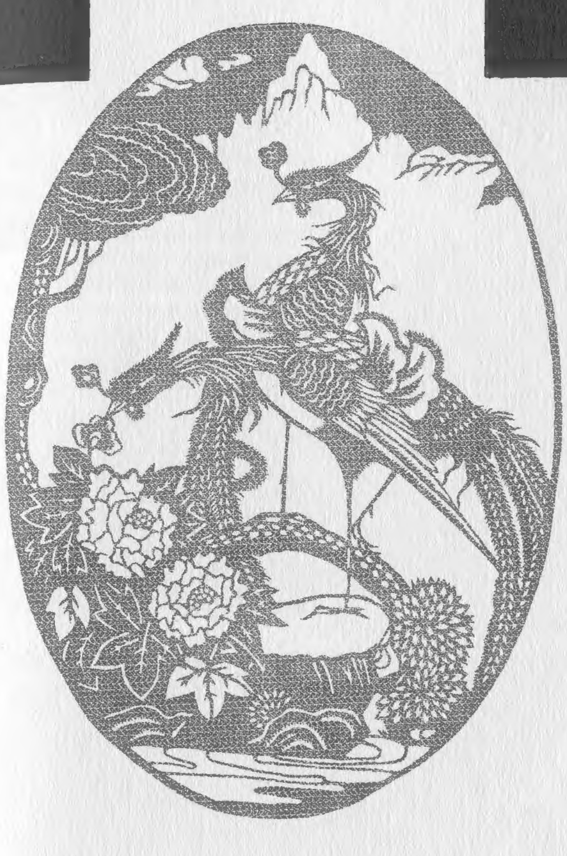
LET'S RETURN TO THE SHOP AND HAVE SOME TEA.
End of Episode

A Lesson in Sexual Education


SEX IS SO SIMPLE THAT EVEN A BABY CAN UNDERSTAND IT. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT BABIES SHOULD BE DOING IT!
Nope, nope, nope!
LET'S SEE...
THIS IS CALLED THE STAMEN, AND THIS... THIS IS THE PISTIL!
LEON!
Heh, heh...
HE SAID "PISTIL."
SO, CHRIS...
...DO YOU KNOW HOW PLANTS PROPOSE TO EACH OTHER?
NO!
WHAT SORT OF HIPPIE CRAP IS THIS?

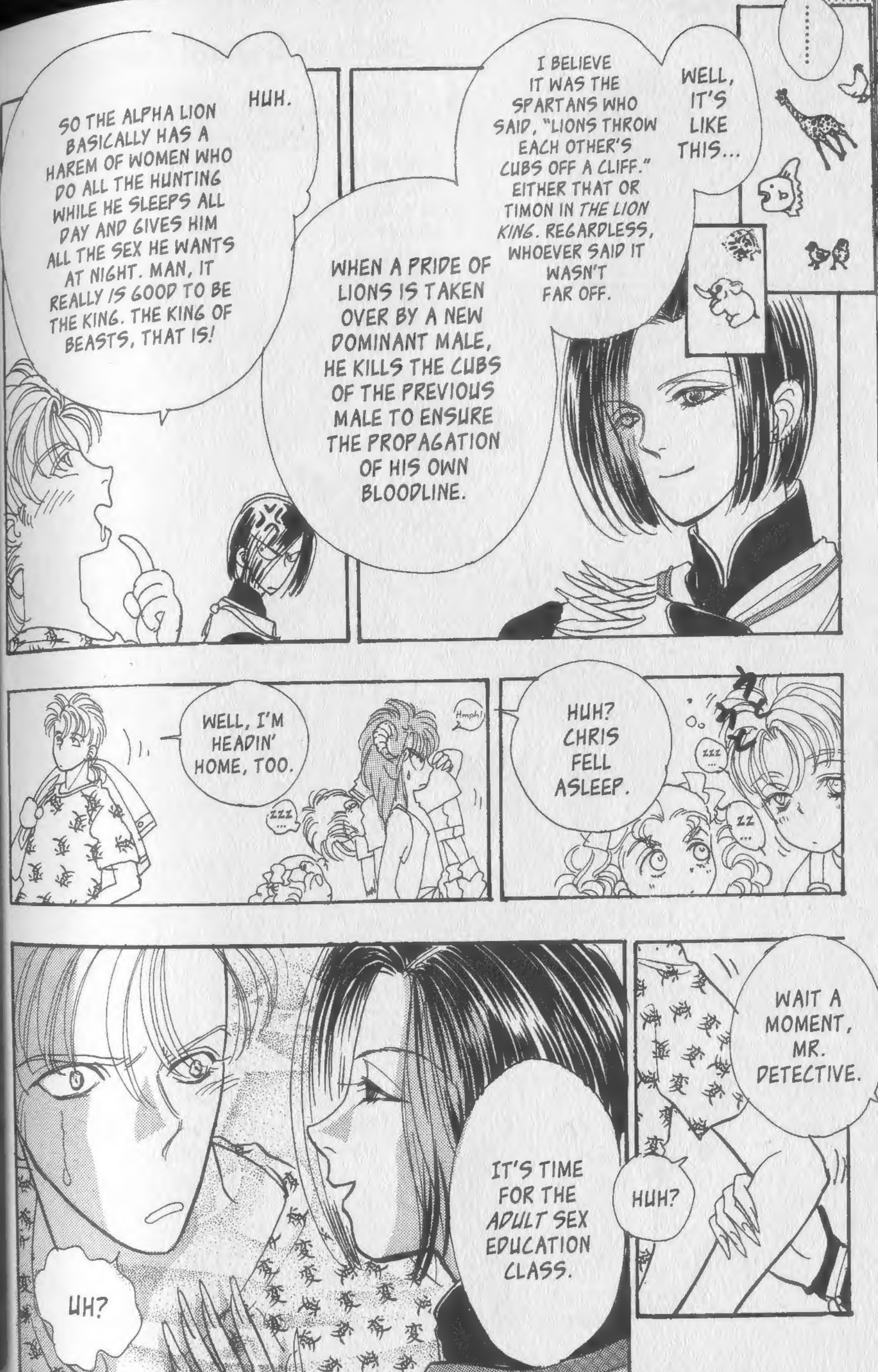
Phoenix

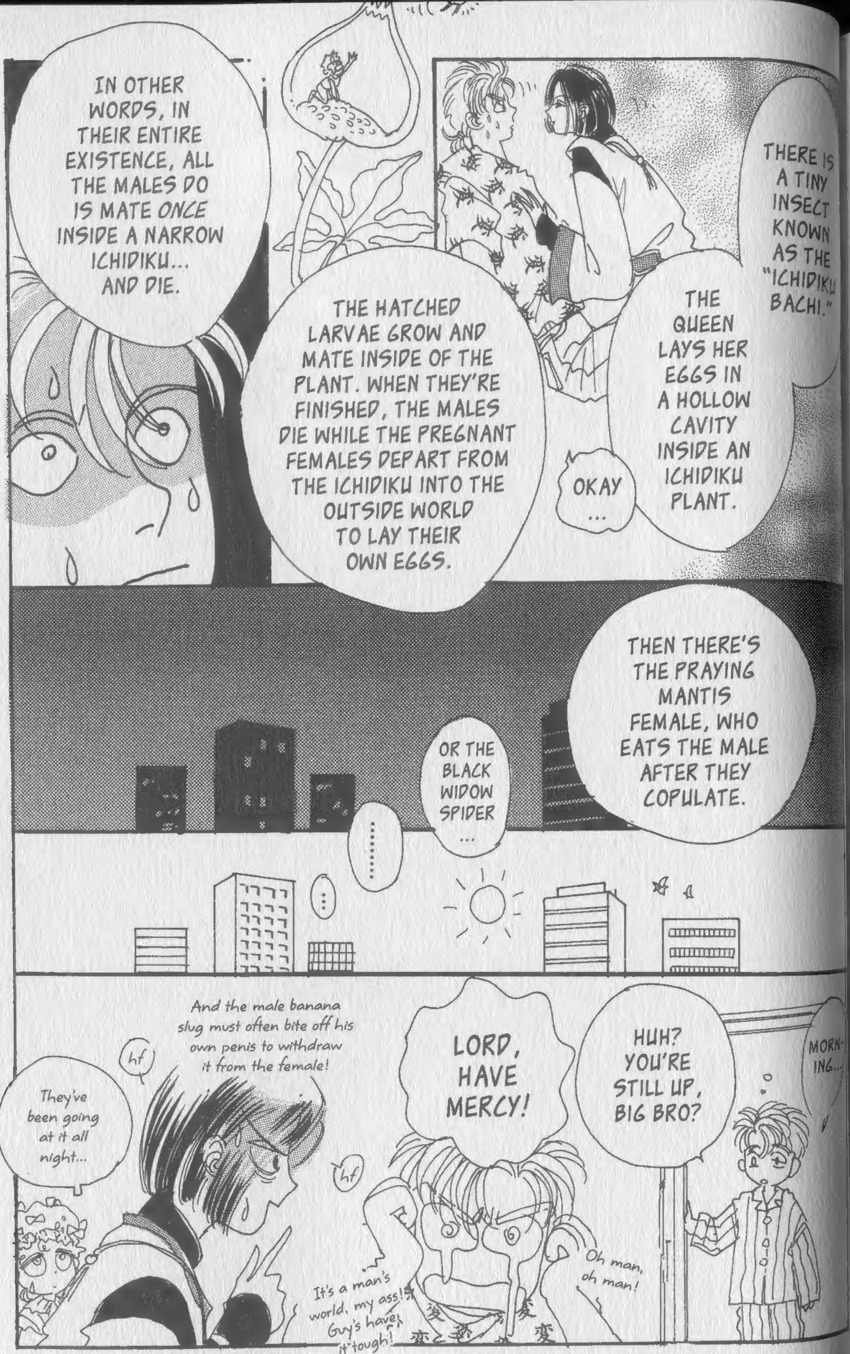
Hou-oh



An ancient mythological bird that is revered as the King of Birds throughout Asia. (Well, China in particular.)

The Hou is the male and the Oh is the female. It's called a phoenix in Europe and America, regardless of whether it's a male or female. According to legend, when a phoenix reaches the end of its life, it bursts into flames. The fire consumes the bird until nothing but ashes remain, then the phoenix is reborn from the ashes.


......
WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS...
I BELIEVE IT WAS THE SPARTANS WHO SAID, "LIONS THROW EACH OTHER'S CUBS OFF A CLIFF." EITHER THAT OR TIMON IN *THE LION KING*. REGARDLESS, WHOEVER SAID IT WASN'T FAR OFF.
WHEN A PRIDE OF LIONS IS TAKEN OVER BY A NEW DOMINANT MALE, HE KILLS THE CUBS OF THE PREVIOUS MALE TO ENSURE THE PROPAGATION OF HIS OWN BLOODLINE.
HUH.
SO THE ALPHA LION BASICALLY HAS A HAREM OF WOMEN WHO DO ALL THE HUNTING WHILE HE SLEEPS ALL DAY AND GIVES HIM ALL THE SEX HE WANTS AT NIGHT. MAN, IT REALLY *IS* GOOD TO BE THE KING. THE KING OF BEASTS, THAT IS!
HUH? CHRIS FELL ASLEEP.
zzz...
zz...
Hmph!
WELL, I'M HEADIN' HOME, TOO.
zzz...
WAIT A MOMENT, MR. DETECTIVE.
HUH?
IT'S TIME FOR THE *ADULT* SEX EDUCATION CLASS.
UH?


THERE IS A TINY INSECT KNOWN AS THE "ICHIDIKU BACHI."
THE QUEEN LAYS HER EGGS IN A HOLLOW CAVITY INSIDE AN ICHIDIKU PLANT.
OKAY ...
THE HATCHED LARVAE GROW AND MATE INSIDE OF THE PLANT. WHEN THEY'RE FINISHED, THE MALES DIE WHILE THE PREGNANT FEMALES DEPART FROM THE ICHIDIKU INTO THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO LAY THEIR OWN EGGS.
IN OTHER WORDS, IN THEIR ENTIRE EXISTENCE, ALL THE MALES DO IS MATE *ONCE* INSIDE A NARROW ICHIDIKU... AND DIE.
THEN THERE'S THE PRAYING MANTIS FEMALE, WHO EATS THE MALE AFTER THEY COPULATE.
OR THE BLACK WIDOW SPIDER ...
....
...
MORN-ING...
HUH? YOU'RE STILL UP, BIG BRO?
Oh man, oh man!
LORD, HAVE MERCY!
It's a man's world, my ass! Guy's have it tough!
And the male banana slug must often bite off his own penis to withdraw it from the female!
hf
hf
They've been going at it all night...

End

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Pet Shop of Horrors™

Welcome to Chinatown! During your visit, be sure to stop by Count D's pet shop, where love and dreams are sold in the form of exotic animals. But animals, as you know, have a tendency to get out of control...

Dreams: A young girl is haunted by dreams from past eras, each one involving the count.

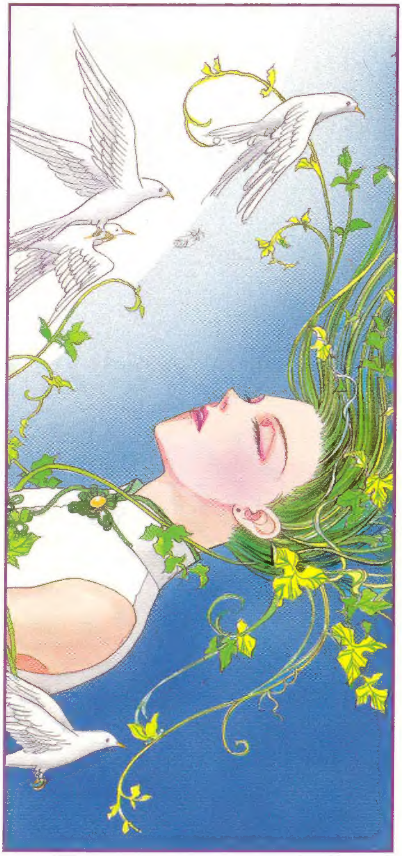
Desire: A dangerous pet, capable of granting anything its owner wants, comes into the possession of a violent mafia don.

Death: A child lives a nightmare in which each of her pets is found violently murdered.

Desperation: A distressed woman, wronged by Orcot, enacts her revenge on those he holds dear ... starting with Count D.

"*Pet Shop of Horrors* is a successful fusion of *Twilight Zone* anthology horror [with] shojo manga conventions."

-Scott Green, Ain't It Cool News



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